JESUS CHRIST
Gods Shepherd,
AND THE
MAN GODS FELLOW,
On *Zach.* 13. 7.

WITH HIS

ANANEΩΣIΣ,

OR, THE

Two STICKS made One,

On *Ezek.* 37. 19.

Preached by that Godly, able, and faithful Minister of Christ, *William Strong*, late of the Abby at *Westminster*.

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XUM

A

TABLE

Containing all the heads, with their Particulars and Branches, in the first subject, Jesus Christ Gods Shepheard, &c.

BEfore the two glorious relations,
1. Jesus Christ Gods Shepheard, And
2. The Man Gods fellow, } Are entred upon,
The great difficulty that lys in the words is cleared, by shewing that there is a double Calender read of in *Daniel*,
1. Provincial and particular. *Page* 1
2. Oecumenical. *page* 2
Herein you have Christs Kingdom set under a double notion. *Ibid.*
And in the twelfth and thirteenth Chapters of *Zachary*, there are two things promised,
A glorious { 1. Redemption, 2. Reformation } *page* 3
Now, that the thirteenth Chapter, *ver.* 7. are the

words ſpoken of Chriſt appears in three particulars.
1. Chriſt is called the Man Gods Fellow.
2. Chriſt applies it to himſelf.
3. The judgement upon the Jews began with the crucifying of Chriſt. *page* 5
Therefore two things are premiſed before the doctrine is propounded, that Chriſt hath ſo many names and relations,
1. To be props to our Faith.
2. To be as the ſtar to lead us unto Chriſt. *page* 6
The Doctrine.
That Jeſus Chriſt is Gods Shepheard: is proved.
Noting herein three properties given to Chriſt as a Shepheard,
Called { 1. The Shepheard of ſouls. 2. The great Shepheard. 3. The good Shepheard. *page* 7, 8
But why Chriſt is called Gods Shepheard, the reaſons are three;
Becauſe { 1. He is appointed to it. 2. He rules and feeds Gods flock. 3. He muſt give an account of them. *Ibid.*
For Chriſts office as a Shepheard lies in ſix things.
He { 1. Seeks the flock. 2. Feeds them. 3. Takes care of them. 4. Heals them. 5. Defends them. 6. Guides them. *page* 9
In the firſt particular you have obſervable,
1. Chriſts ſeeking them that are ſtrangers to the fold, and how he doth it, laid down in ſix concluſions.

He

He { 1. Takes notice of them.
2. Takes the ſet time.
3. Doth it as his duty.
4. Doth more in ſome ages then others.
5. Seeks them early.
6. Uſeth means, and removes impediments.
from p. 10 *to* 15

And before Chriſt brings ſuch ſtrangers and wanderers home; the danger of ſuch a way of ſinning is diſcovered in five particulars. *page* 15. 16

And therefore, how he reduceth them, is held forth ſix waies.

By { 1 Afflictions.
2 Withdrawing his preſence.
3 Quickning their graces.
4 Remembring the ſweetneſs of their former condition.
5 Stirring up others to pray for them.
6 Some diſcoveries of his love.
from page 15, *to* 18

Under the ſecond particular of Chriſts feeding his ſheep, is ſhewn,

1 That Chriſt is the chief Shepheard, yet under him are two ſorts of Shepheards,
1 Magiſtrates.
2 Miniſters.

So, that as the Lord requires duty from Miniſters: ſo, from Magiſtrates to feed his flock: and this three waies,

To { 1 Provide for the ordinances.
2 Support the Saints.
3 Remove hindrances of nouriſhment. *page* 19

Now, 1 Who it is that feeds them, And
2 The nature of this food is held forth in ſix particulars.

It is food { 1 Pretious. 2 Pleasant. 3 Plentiful. 4 Suitable, And that { 1 To their nature. 2 To the degree of their life. 5 Prepared. 6 Immortal. *from page 19, to 23*

That this food is spiritual, is laid down in six branches.

Christ feeds them with { 1 Himself. 2 Gospel Promises and Ordinances. 3 The consolations of his Spirit. 4 His rod. 5 Fruits one of another. 6 Variety of Providences. *p. 23, to 25*

The manner how Christ feeds his flock, is spoken to in six heads.

With { 1 Compassion. 2 Judgement. 3 Daily new food.

In { 4 The wilderness. 5 The strength of the Lord. 6 To strength and growth. *from p. 25, to 27*

The third act of Christ, is his care of his sheep, and this is seen,

1. As to his dispensations for the present in six particulars.

For { 1 Their instruction. 2 Seasonable supply. 3 Presenting their persons and services to the Father. 4 Protecting and preserving them. 5 Avenging their cause. 6 Turning evil intended to their good. *from page 28, to 32*

2 Christs care is seen as to his dispensations for the future, in six particulars:

By
1 Preparing and forewarning them of evil.
2 Providing for their necessities before they feel them.
3 Crosses preventing their sin.
4 Laying in consolations before hand.
5 Laying up prayers for them.
6 Preparing glory for them. *from p.* 33, *to* 35

But, how a soul may know that he comes under this care of Christ, answered in two particulars,

By
1 His casting of his care on Christ.
2 His care of the things of Christ. *page* 35, 36

The fourth act, which Christ performs as a Shepheard, is in healing the diseases of the flock, And

1 Christ heals the sickness of the soul, and herein sin is fitly called a sickness, in four respects.

Sin it
1 Is within.
2 Is contrary to the spiritual nature.
3 Hinders the actions of the spiritual life.
4 Produceth
1 Pain.
2 Decay.
3 Deformity.
4 Corruption. *p.* 37, 38

The Physick Christ gives to heal, hath six ingredients.

Christ heals by
1 His own blood, man being indebted
1 To God.
2 To Satan.
2 His Spirit.
3 His Word.
4 Examples of the Saints.
5 Afflictions.
6 With the sins
1 Of others.
2 Of our own.

from p. 39, *to* 41

2 Christ heals the wounds of a State, yet six things make such wounds dangerous.

When they are
1 Deep.
2 Many.
3 Festered.
4 Inflamed.
5 After variety of means used not cured.
6 After the means used grow worse. *p.* 42, 43

Notwithstanding, Christ heals such wounds six wales.

He
1 Brings them to utter despair in themselves.
2 Brings them to repentance.
3 Works a thorough reformation.
4 Makes Magistrates healers.
5 Takes away the spirit of bitterness.
6 Pours out a spirit of prayer *from p.* 44, *to* 46

In the fift act, how Christ defends his flock, is enquired who are the enemies to the flock, and they are reckoned up to be five,

1 Satan
2 Open persecutors.
3 False teachers.
4 Great men.
5 Self seeking shepheards. *from p.* 47, *to* 50

Now the design of the enemy is,

1 To catch some
2 To scatter others
that
And
1 By open persecution.
2 By division. *p.* 51

But Christ hath undertaken,

1 That Satan shall not devour them, in five particulars.

By

By
1 Taking possession of them himself.
2 Discovering Satans wiles.
3 Teaching his how to act faith.
4 Representing the odiousness of being acted by Satan.
5 Rebuking violent temptations. p.52,53

2 Christ hath undertaken that persecutors,
1 Shall not destroy them: And that,
1 By hiding them.
2 By melting their hearts.
2 They shall not scatter them,
1 Through difference in judgement, in five particulars.
By
1 Keeping their spirits humble.
2 Keeping their judgements chast.
3 Ballancing them with love of the truth.
4 Keeping a good conscience.
5 A holy neglect of strange opinions.
page 53,54

Nay they shall not scatter them.
2 Through difference in affections, and this Christ doth seven waies.
By
1 Keeping them close to the Word.
2 Joynt consent in practice.
3 Sobriety in wisdom.
4 Silencing questions.
5 Beholding each others graces.
6 Praying one for another.
7 Presenting the sad effects of such alienations. page 55,56

The sixth act holds forth Christs guidance of his flock, and how he doth it. p. 57
Wherein this truth is inquired into, by speaking to six heads.

Under

Under the first head, that in all the wayes of Gods people there is a way of God to be found and taken heed unto, there is a double way of man,
1 Of his heart.
2 Of his life. page 58
2 A Christians skill is to know the way of God in both.
3 It's hard to keep in Gods way being found. page 59
4 Christ hath undertaken to lead his flock in this way, and that in six particulars.
By { 1 His Word. 2 His Spirit. 3 His own example. 4 Their own prayers. 5 His eye. 6 Special hints of providence. } from page 60, to 62
Now the happiness of being thus led by Christ, appears in four things,
He leads them { 1 Clearly. 2 Gently. 3 Sweetly. 4 Unerringly. } page 63,64
The directions how a man may have Christ thus to lead him, are three.
Let him { 1 Renounce the guidance of his own wisdom. 2 Be tractable to Christs guidance. 3 Look up daily to Christ for direction. } page 65

The

The next Relation in the Text, Jesus Christ the Man Gods fellow.

There are four names in Scripture given to Christ, whereby he is signified to be a man.

Called
1 Adam. } pag. 66
2 Enosh. }
3 Ish.
4 Geber. } pag. 67

The sence of the word My fellow, is made up in three things.

1 Christ in point of honour is next to God, this is cleared, *ibid.*
  1 In reference to God.
    1 In that God hath honoured him with the highest titles.
    2 Gods design is to exalt him above all the creatures.
2 In reference to the creatures, in four particulars.
1 There is more of God in Christ, then in all the creatures.
2 More of Soveraignty.
3 All religious worship is to be given to him.
4 The happiness of the creature depends on him. *from pag. 68, to 70*

2 Christ is next to God in Intimacy, appears in four particulars.

Knows
1 All Gods decrees.
2 All Gods ends.
3 All Gods works.
4 The whole word of God. pag. 70, 71

3 Christ is Gods fellow-labourer, and that God doth all by him, appears in six things.

In
1 Revelation of himself.
2 Supportation of the creature.
3 Governing the world.
4 Conversion of souls.
5 Judgeing the world by Christ.
6 Administration of all things in the world to come. pag. 72, 73

The first use, is, to let Christ have honour next to God.

For first, God is the fountain of all glory.

2 All the honour that God will have from the creature, he will have it by Christ; therefore this makes most for the glory of the Father, and of the Son. from pag. 74, to 76

Now the glory given to Christ is religious worship, and this is,

1 Natural worship, in ten particulars.

By
1 Knowing of him.
2 Believing on him.
3 Loving of him.
4 Fearing of him.
5 Praying to him.
6 Rejoycing in his advancement.
7 Ascribing all glory to him.
8 Blessing our selves in him.
9 Bringing presents to him.
10 Abasing our selves before him. p. 76. to 79

2 Christ is to be honoured with instituted worship, appears in six heads.

1 He is appointed to raise up a Church.
2 He only can institute and abrogate ordinances.
3 He only can appoint the end of ordinances.
4 He only can appoint who shall partake of them.
5 He only can appoint Church officers.

6 He

6 He only can unchurch a Church. *from pag. 79, to 82*
The second Use, is, to bear up the Saints spirits to believe in Christ. *from pag. 83, to 85*
The grounds to stay their faith on Christ are ten.
1 He dispenseth all Gods decrees.
2 He Governs the world for the Churches good. *pag. 80*
3 The Saints are in his hands.
4 He acts all second causes. *pag. 87*
5 There is an invisible vertue in all his administrations.
6 He in them elevates the creature beyond their intentions, or mens expectations. *pag. 88*
7 He marks his own for preservation in times of judgement.
8 He is ingaged to deliver his people.
9 He appears when his Church is low. *pag. 89*
10 In the end of the world he will awake for his Church. *pag. 90*

A

TABLE

Of all the heads, with the ſeveral Particulars and Branches, in the two Sticks made one.

IN *Ezekiel* chap. 37. there are two things.

1 A redemption and reſtitution to a Civil and Church-ſtate.

2 A re-union. *p. 97*

From the words of the text, *Ezekiel* 37. 19. four doctrines are raiſed. *ibid.*

And from the firſt doctrine,

That diviſions among brethren, though heightened by never ſo much violence and long continuance, yet God, and God only can heal: you have three things ſpoken unto in explication.

The firſt ſhews to what height diviſions among brethren may grow, and that in ſeven particulars.

1 Bonds of nature will not hold. *pag. 98*

2 Gods

2 Gods ſtamp of authority upon one above another will not hold. *ibid.*
3 Tyes of grace will not hold.
4 There may be jealouſie one of another. *pag.* 99
5 They may not know how to live or act together. *page* 99
6 They may plot and deſign one anothers ruine and deſtruction.
7 They may joyn with the wickedeſt men each againſt other. *page* 100
The firſt doctrine is firſt proved by Scripture, and reduced to four heads.
God { 1 Challengeth it. 2 Promiſed it. 3 Hath done it. 4 Only can make war. *pag.* 101, 102
The doctrine is ſecondly proved by four reaſons.
1 It is an act of his Soveraignty.
2 He only can make war.
3 He only can over-rule the hearts of men,
Faſhioning { 1 Their conſultations. 2 Their affections.
4 Wars depend on his decree. *from pag.* 102, *to* 104
Now the union that God makes between divided brethren, hath ten ingredients.

Peace
1 With truth, 1 In conjunction.
And that 2 In subordination. pag. 105
2 With holiness. page 107
3 With righteousness. page 108
4 With sincerity. page 109
5 Under which the righteous may flourish. page 110
6 Keeping covenant.
7 As it is the fruit of the teaching and government of Christ. page 111

This teaching of Christ includes two things,
In 1 Inlightning the understanding.
2 Inclining, subduing, and determining the will.

Peace
8 It is such as must be laid in taking away every accursed thing. page 112
9 It shall bear down all opposition.
10 With a blessing. page 113

The Use of this, is, to cease from man, and to look up to God for peace.
How to obtain this peace, there are six particulars.
1 Be sensible that it is the Lords controversie.
2 Accept the punishment. page 115
3 Exercise faith on promises.
4 Be humbled and pray each for other.
5 Condescend as far as is lawful.
6 Set your selves in a way of peace. page 116
Now first, to have such a peace in a civil state, six directions, And
2 To have such a peace in a Church, consider the differences.
1 As fundamental. page 117.
2 As superstructory.
Then, the way to peace lies in six things.
And the Question, why the Lord saies he will break the

the ſtaffe of bands afterwards, when it was broken before, anſwered. *page* 119

The ſecond doctrine, that the re-union of a divided people among themſelves is the fruit of their reconciliation with their God, is proved in four concluſions.

1 God hath ſometimes a controverſie with men.

2 Gods controverſie is often managed by the difference of men amongſt themſelves. *page* 120

3 When it is ended, mens differences ceaſe. *page* 121

4 Till this be taken up, all endeavours of men will be in vain. *page* 122

The grounds of it are four.

1 When God is reconciled, then a Nation is pardoned. *page* 123

2 Their iniquity is healed. *page* 124

And here in ſin four things neceſſarily cauſe diviſion.

Luſt is
1 Proud.
2 Fierce.
3 Cruel and invective. *page* 125
4 Inſatiable. *page* 126

3 When God is reconciled, he removes evil inſtruments. *ibid.*

4 A people reconciled have a right to all the promiſes. *page* 128

The firſt uſe of inſtruction ſhews the reaſon why our diviſions continue. And,

Why
1 Our hopes are fruſtrated.
2 Inſtruments are in vain. *page* 129
3 Prayers return empty. *page* 130

So that God will be diſpleaſed with a Nation, and that you may know when ſins grow up into

to a National quarrel in five particulars.

When
1 They universally over-spread.
2 Interwoven into the policy of a State. page 131
3 Saints are corrupted with sin.
4 All men love to have it so. page 132
5 The general bent of the Nation goes that way. page 133

The second use of exhortation, shews that you must look up to God for reconciliation, for he hath a quarrel with Nations, and that in four particulars.

1 He is King of Nations. page 133
2 He sets bounds to your sins.
3 When they have filled up their measure of sins God hides his face.
4 God is reconciled to them. page 134, to 137

Therefore be affected with four things,

Because
1 God in National quarrels proceeds by degrees.
2 People are insensible.
3 God usually mixes spiritual with temporal judgements. page 137
4 That God should proceed so against a Nation and the sins of it to be filled up in your daies.

And therefore labour to reconcile God and the Nation. page 138

For yet there is hope that God will be reconciled,

Because

Because { 1 This is one of the ten Kingdoms that departed from *Rome*.
2 The vials are now pouring out on the Romish state, *&c.*
3 God hath a holy people here that will take root. *page* 139

But the persons required to do it are two.
1 A whole Nation.
2 The Saints especially. *page* 140, 141

And these must do six things.
1 God requires them to mourn for the sins and judgements upon the land. And here note three particulars.
1 Be affected answerable to the dispensation of every attribute of God.
2 This should imbitter all your comforts.
3 God respects a Nation for your mourning.
2 God requires you should be Mediators for a Nation. *page* 143

And here note three things.
Such must be { 1 The most free.
2 The most holy in the Nation.
3 Much in obedience. *page* 144

And obedience is threefold.
Obedience { 1 Of desire.
2 Of conformity.
3 Of resignation.
3 God requires such to be much in supplication for a Nation, and here note,
1 God hath subjected all special and common providences to the Saints prayers.
2 If their prayers prevail not, there is no hopes. *page* 145
3 Prayer that prevails for a dying Nation, must be,

1 Humble.
2 Fiducial. } page 146
3 Constant.
4 God requires such to lay hold on Christ for a Nation.
5 God requires that such must administer justice impartially. page 147
Therefore justice must be done,
1 On such as have shed blood.
2 On such as are blasphemers and incorrigible false teachers. page 148
6 God requires that such must unite their prayers for a Nation. page 149
And why this union is resembled to two sticks made one, resolved in page 150
The first branch of the third doctrine shews, that when God unites a people, they shall be one. p. 151
In doing this,
1 He gives them one heart, that is,
1 One judgement.
2 One will. page 152
3 The same affections.
2 He gives them one way,
That they shall { 1 Speak the same things. 2 Act the same things. page 153
In the Primitive times unity of heart lay in six things.
1 Every man in his proper place yeilded obedience to the Word. ibid.
2 All things were done without partiality.
3 Every one was content with his present condition.
4 They chused rather to obey then rule.
5 They forbore and forgave each other.
6 They prayed for the whole brotherhood.

The

The ſecond branch of the doctrine, that when God unites a people, he puts forth,
1 An act of Almighty power. *page* 154
2 An act of ſpecial grace. *page* 155
The greatneſs of this favour lies in five things.
1 It is á removal of the greateſt miſery.
2 It ſhall end in the enemies deſtruction.
3 Chriſt ſhall be entertained for their King.
4 There ſhall be abundance of righteouſneſs.
5 All other proſperity ſhall follow. *page* 156
The third branch of the doctrine, when God doth this, he will have it acknowledged by all, ſpoken to. *ibid.*
The fourth doctrine, that long diviſions among brethren God ſeldom heals till both parties are brought very low and all humane hope paſt, cleared in four particulars.
1 God ſeldom heals the wounds of a people till they be deſperate.
2 Till they have tried all other waies. *page* 158
3 He doth it by a creating word.
4 He doth it not till they are dry ſticks as appears in three unions.
Between { 1 God and Gentiles. *page* 159 / 2 Jews and Jews. / 3 Gentiles and Jews. *page* 160
The reaſons are three.
Becauſe { 1 God herein will be acknowledged God. / 2 Till then a people are not fit for mercy. *page* 161 / 3 Till then the cauſe of the difference will continue.
Now the cauſes of the preſent war are four.

1 Pride and affection of power.
2 Wilfulneſs.
3 Unteachableneſs. } page 162
4 A ſpirit of revenge.
The Uſe ſhews how far we are from peace.
Conſidering the ſtrange judgement upon us,
In reſpect { 1 Of ſecurity and inſenſibleneſs.
2 Mens rage againſt one another.
3 Of the common enemy having power and policy. page 163
Now that you may know when a people is qualified for peace, five rules.
When they { 1 Silently ſubmit to the hand of God.
2 Are ready to forgive each other.
3 Reject all vain confidence. page 164
4 Mourn after the Lord.
5 Are willing to hear what is the will of God. page 165

FINIS.

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FINIS.

Jeſus Chriſt Gods Shepheard,

AND

The MAN Gods Fellow.

Zach. 13. 7.

Awake, O ſword, againſt my Shepheard, and againſt the Man that is my fellow, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.

THe ſubject we have in hand, is to open the relations wherein Jeſus Chriſt ſtands to God the Father; many of them we have diſpatched. In theſe words you have two other glorious relations: He is *Gods Shepheard*, and the *Man Gods fellow*. But before we come to enter upon what we intend, there is a great deal of difficulty in the words, and much controverſie amongſt Interpreters about them; which we muſt ſpeak ſomething unto, for the better clearing of them. You read in *Daniel* of a double ſacred Calender, the one General and Oecumenical, the other Particular and Provincial: and all the times in Scripture from thence are included under theſe. The Provincial and Particular Calender you have in ch. 9. ver. 24. *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thine holy City, to finiſh the tranſgreſſion, and to make an end of ſins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlaſting righte-*

ouſneſs,

ouſneſs, and to ſeal up the viſion and Propheſie, and to anoint the moſt holy. There the Lord ſets down how long the Jewiſh State, together with the ſecond Temple, ſhould continue after it was built, ſeventy prophetical weeks, which contain 490. years, and then utter deſolation both of the Temple and of the State came, and they were left *without a King, and without a Prince, and without a Sacrifice, and without an Image, and without an Ephod, and without Teraphim*, Hoſ. 3. 4. This I mention to take away ſeveral miſtakes that you may have about ſeveral places of Scripture, which being ſpoken of the deſolation of this State of the Jews, men do commonly apply them to the end of the world: ſo, that place is uſually miſunderſtood, 1 *Joh.* 2. 18. *Little children, it is the laſt time*: What! of the world? no: but of the State of the Jews. So *Heb.* 10. 35, 36, 37. the Lord comforts his people with this, *Yet a little while, and he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarry*, he ſpeaks of Chriſts coming to avenge the perſecution of the Chriſtians upon the Jews. So alſo, 1 *Pet.* 4. 7. *The end of all things is at hand*: it is not to be referred to the end of the world, but is ſpoken in reference to that particular people, that the end of all things was at hand, and ſo it it ſaid, *after the threeſcore and two weeks, the conſumption is determined to be poured out on the deſolation*, Dan. 10. 27.

The Oecumenical Calender you have in chap. 2. ver. 34, 35. *Thou ſaweſt till that a ſtone was cut out without hands, which ſmote the Image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the braſs, the ſilver and the gold broken in pieces together, and became like the chaffe of the ſummer threſhing floors, and the wind carried them away, and no place was found for them: and the ſtone that ſmote the Image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.* This ſets out how long the Kingdom of Chriſt in the native ſubject the Jews, or in the ſurrogated or ſubſtituted ſubject, the Gentiles, ſhould continue. This is ſet down in that ſecond of *Daniel*, where you have the Kingdom of Chriſt ſet out under a double notion. 1. *A ſtone cut out without hands*, it was not at firſt a mountain. When is this ſtone hewn out without hands? when God ſets up a Kingdom: when is that? it ſhall appear in the fourth Monarchy, for it did not break

break the head of gold, nor the breasts and arms of silver, nor the belly and thighs of brass, but it smote the Image upon his feet, which were of iron and clay. Which notes the fourth Kingdom, that was to be strong as iron, *ver.* 40. And when the Image was destroyed and abolished by the little stone, then it grows up, and becomes a great mountain, and so you have a double state of this Kingdom. Now when shall this be? when shall this stone become a great mountain? when God shall again bring in his ancient people. *When* Jerusalem according to the Propheſie, *Zach.* 14. 12. *Shall be inhabited in her own place, even in* Jerusalem: *and when God shall remember his Covenant made with her in the dayes of her youth, and shall establish to her an everlasting Covenant*, according to his promise, *Ezek.* 16. 60.

Now in these two Chapters of *Zachary*, you have a glorious promise of these two things.

1. There is a glorious redemption promised: look into the twelfth Chapter, there you shall find the Lord promiseth, first to the Jews, a glorious conversion, not only Ecclesiastical, but personal. I will pour out upon the house of *David*, and upon the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, and they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him, *&c Ver.* 10. It is a publick and general Conversion, not as some would understand it, to be of some few: but it is a publick mourning, there shall be a great mourning in *Jerusalem*, all the land shall mourn, every family apart, *ver.* 11, 12. and so on. Where God intends good to a people he pours out a Spirit of grace and mourning upon them, and works conversion in them.

2. Upon their conversion there shall follow a glorious reformation, in this thirteenth Chapter, ver. 1. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of *David*, and to the inhabitants of *Jerusalem* for sin and for uncleanness; an abundant reformation, a glorious purging; and that shall not be all, it shall not be personal only, but it shall be Ecclesiastical too. I will cut off the names of the Idols out of the land, and they shall be no more remembred; God will cause men to cast away their Idols, God will cause the false Prophets to pass out of the land, and that there may be no more

false Prophets, God will cause the unclean spirit to pass out too, *ver.* 2. On this shall follow a great zeal for the purity of Gods truth and worship, so that if a son prophesie lyes in the name of the Lord, his Father and Mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth: the meaning is, after all wayes used by reproof and chastisement, if he persist they shall bring him to the Magistrate, that he may be put to death, so *Tremelius*, *quod ipse facit per alium*, *ipse dicitur facere*: because the Father brought him to the Magistrate to have it done, he himself is said to do it. And not only thus it was in the time of the Old Testament, but it is a Propheſie of the most glorious Church under the New Testament, and shall not be accounted persecution then, for false teachers to be punished by the Magistrate; and by Gods blessing this shall so far prevail, not to exasperate men; but the false Prophets shall be convinced and ashamed every one of his vision, and be converted to God, and shall no more wear a rough garment to deceive; they shall be willing to take any course, rather then to deceive the people any more: But he shall say, I am no Prophet, I am an husbandman, for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth, *ver.* 4. and 5. and they shall acknowledge these sharp courses were taken by their friends, when they shall be asked, what be these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, those with which I have been wounded in the house of my friends: the wounds of a friend shall be faithful, but the flattery of an enemy is fearful. These be the times when *Ezekiels* Temple shall be built, and the new *Jerusalem* come down from God out of Heaven, for with these times the mysterie of God is finished, *Revel.* 10. 7.

But before this come, a terrible desolation is threatned, such as you do not read of elsewhere: two parts shall be cut off, *ver* 8. and *Daniel* 9. 26. the end shall be with a floud. It could not be spoken of the captivity into *Babylon*, for it was spoken after; but it speaks of a time to come afterwards, *de ultimo clade*, of the last destruction of this state. Now what shall make way for this desolation? why, see in the words read. *Awake, O sword, against my Shepheard, and against the Man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts.* Smite the Shepheard

Shepheard and the sheep shall be scattered. Christ must be cut off and his followers scattered, there shall follow a dispersion of the Church, and then the utter destruction comes. This is the order, first Christ dyes, then in the Apostles time the Church is scattered, and soon after, all that are in the land are cut off: If any scruple at the conversion of the words here used, that being in these propheſies spoken first, which was to be executed last, observe that it is usual with God to use this order. In Scripture to propheſie that first, which shall be accomplished afterwards, is very frequent; the promise is first made though last accomplished, and the threatning last denounced though first executed; many instances might be given of it. So then, these words are a Propheſie of the death of Christ, as a forerunner of the Churches dispersion, and the Jews desolation. *Awake, O sword against my Shepheard,* &c. the Lord doth not say, he will cause the sword to take away his Shepheard, but by an Apostrophe very emphatical, he speaks to the sword: *Awake, O sword,* &c. like that in *Esay* 1. 2. Hear, O Heavens, and hearken O earth: or that *Psal.* 57. 8. Awake my Harp: and the Church useth the like expression, Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord, *Esa.* 51. 9. And so *Jer.* 47. 6. The Prophet turns to the sword. O thou sword of the Lord, when wilt thou be quiet? and the sword makes answer again. How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath sent it? When God will express things to the height, then he doth as it were, fain a person. When God tells you Christ shall be cut off, and not for his sin, but for yours, he calls to the sword, *Awake, O sword,* &c.

That these words are spoken of Christ, will appear, if you consider,

1. That he is called the Man Gods fellow.

2. That it is by our Saviour Christ applyed to himself, *Mat.* 26. 31. Then said Jesus unto them, all ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the Shepheard, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. Therefore it is Jesus Christ who is this Shepheard.

3. Because we find by woful experience, that the judgement upon the Jews did begin with the crucifying of Christ.

This was the order, Christ slain, the Church scattered, the Jews destroyed. So then the words are spoken of Christ, and in them you have a double relation wherein he stands to God the Father. 1. As a Shepheard, and then 2. As the Man Gods fellow.

The first relation is; Jesus Christ as Mediator is Gods Shepheard.

And here before we come to speak to it particularly; let me premise these two things in all these relations and denominations.

1. God hath called Christ by so many names, and given him so many relations; to be props to your Faith, concerning his variety of sufficiency in all your necessities. He is not only an everlasting Father, but an Husband, a Friend, whatsoever you can stand in need of; so that whereas among men one relation doth not supply all, and therefore you must have many: all of them meet and are in Christ, and the people of God have made use of them as props to their Faith.

2. These many names and relations are given to Christ, that they may be to you, as the Star was to the Wise-men, to lead you to Christ, whatsoever you do, and wheresoever you are: that when you arise in the morning you may remember, Jesus Christ is the Sun of Righteousness, *Mal.* 4. 2. when you put on your cloaths, remember Jesus Christ put on by Faith is the wedding garment. When you wash, remember Jesus Christ is a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. When you eat, remember Christ is the bread of life. When you walk, Christ is the way. When you rest, Christ is the end. Be what you will, or who you will, he hath a relation suitable for every man. If he be a King, he should think of him who is the Prince of the Kings of the earth. If he be a Minister, look on him who is the Bishop of souls. If a Lawyer, Jesus Christ is the Councellor. If a Merchant, he is the pearl of great price. If a Husbandman, this is the seed. Nay the Lord hath not left children without something to know Christ by, even such as learn but A, B, C. He calls him Alpha and Omega, to teach us that there is a sufficiency in Christ to supply us in every kind and condition, and here, *Jesus Christ is Gods Shepheard.*

Doct:

In

In the prosecution hereof, we shall first prove the point, and give you some Scriptures for explication of it.

2. We shall shew you the grounds of it.

3. Wherein the office of a Shepheard consisteth, and how Christ doth discharge this office.

For the first, to prove that Jesus Christ is Gods Shepheard. Christ Gods Shepheard.

That the people of God are compared to sheep and to a little flock in Scripture is usual, and that this flock is committed to Christ is plain in many places: the Lord delights to use this name concerning Christ: *Ezek.* 34. 23. *I will set up one Shepheard over them, even my servant* David, *he shall feed them, and shall be their Shepheard:* it is spoken of Christ, and Christ delights to call himself so. *Joh.* 10. 11. *I am the good Shepheard,* the godly have found much comfort in this relation. *David* did so: *The Lord is my Shepheard, therefore shall I lack nothing,* Psal. 23. 1. So doth the Church. *Give ear, O thou Shepheard of* Israel, *thou that leadest* Joseph *like a sheep,* Psal. 80. 1. Sure there is much therefore in the word Shepheard. There be these three properties given to Christ as a Shepheard.

1. He is called the Shepheard of your souls, 1 *Pet.* 2. 25. Christ is a Shepheard in a spiritual respect, as it reacheth to your souls. 1. Christ the Shepheard of souls.

2. He is the great Shepheard, so he is stiled, *the Lord Jesus the great Shepheard of the sheep,* Heb. 13. 20. 2. The great Shepheard.

He is called the chief Shepheard, *When the chief Shepheard shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away,* 1 Pet. 5. 4. It is true, other Shepheards there be, Ministers and Magistrates: but these feed by commission under Christ, the flock is committed to him, and of his hand God will require them: therefore he is called רעה אחד the one Shepheard, so *Eccles.* 12. 11. *the words of the wise are as goads and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from the one Shepheard.* He speaks of Divine truths. And the Lord there shews us a double benefit that comes by them. 1. We are dull, and these are goads, they quicken men to duty. 2. Men are full of instability, and Divine truths are nails to fasten them. How come they to be so? not because they are fastened by the Masters of the Assemblies,

blies, but because they are given by the one Shepheard.

3. The good Shepheard.

3 *Christ is the good Shepheard,* Joh. 10. 11. whoever he be that shall look abroad on the Shepheards, in the world, in the Magistracy, and in the Ministry; and see how many foolish Shepheards there are, may fear least God have said concerning us, as he did to the Prophet in the eleventh of this Propheſie, *ver.* 15, 16. *Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish Shepheard, for lo, I will raise up a Shepheard in the land which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still, but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces.* I have been a Shepheard, saith Christ, to them thus long, now I will provide them foolish Shepheards, Idol shepheards, as it is in the next verse.

2. He that shall consider how many foolish Shepheards there are that mislead the flock, as God complained, *the leaders of his people caused them to erre,* Isa. 9. 16. The generality of people are as a lump apt to receive any leaven, as sheep ready to be led any way, and so are easily seduced by them.

3. He that shall consider how many hirelings there are that undertake the conduct, but for the fleece. And,

4. How many cruel Shepheards that eat the fat, and drink the sweet, but care not for the flock; he will say there is surely a great deal of comfort in this expression, that Jesus Christ hath undertaken the office of a Shepheard to his people: so much for the proof of it, that Christ is a Shepheard. But now, why is he called Gods Shepheard?

Because he is appointed to it.

Reas. 1. First, because he is appointed to it by God, as he is Gods King, because he received a Kingdom from him, *Psal.* 2. 6. so he is Gods Shepheard, because God hath appointed him to that office, so in that *Ezek.* 34. 23. *I will set up one Shepheard over them.*

He rules and feeds them.

Reas. 2. Because he rules Gods flock and feeds them, called in *Zach.* 11 7. *the flock of the slaughter.*

He must give an account of them.

Reas. 3. Because he must give an account of them unto God: you have his account he gives, *Behold I and the Children which God hath given me,* Heb. 2. 13. All inferior shepheards must give their accompt to Christ. *We must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ,* 2 Cor. 5. 10.

but

but Christ gives up his accompt to God the Father, the trust of the flock is laid on him, and if any be lost God will require it at his hand; who when he gives up his Kingdom, will then also give up his account; and for these reasons Jesus Christ is called Gods Shepheard.

We come now to the third particular: wherein doth the office of a Shepheard lye, that Jesus Christ is said to be Gods Shepheard? what doth Christ do as a Shepheard, that we may see how the word doth competere to him? Wherein the office of Christ as a Shepheard lyes.

There are six things wherein Christ discharged the duty of a Shepheard.

1. He seeks the flock.
2. He feeds them.
3. He takes care of them.
4. He heals them.
5. He defends them.
6. He guides his flock.

We shall speak to each of these particulars.

1. He seeks the flock.

To begin with the first. The Lord Jesus Christ is Gods Shepheard, for he doth seek the flock of God; you shall find in *Ezek.* 34. 6. that is laid as the great blame on the Shepheards of *Israel*. *My sheep wandred through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.* So likewise afterwards in several other verses. *Because my flock became a prey, and the Shepheards did not search for my flock, therefore thus saith the Lord, behold, I am against the Shepheards, and I will require my flock at their hands: the shepheards shall not feed themselves any more, but I will deliver my flock out of their mouths, that they may not be meat for them.* It is spoken both of Magistrates and Ministers; so long as there came in personal gain, though the people wandered on every mountain and hill, it agreed with the Magistrates policy, and with the Ministers profit: for the Lord sayes of them, *they eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart on their iniquity*, Hos. 4. 8. This is the great complaint, but mark now in the twelfth verse what the Lord promiseth, *As a shepheard seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out*

of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. This then is the office Christ hath promised to undertake, the scattered sheep he will seek out.

Note here, the flock of God is a flock of sheep, the Church is made up of sheep, not of goats nor swine; though you should crowd sheep, and goats, and swine into one place, yet they will not make up one flock, there are none but sheep that are of the flock, it is the sheep that Christ will seek. And observe here,

1. He seeks out them that are strangers to the fold.

1. There be some that belong to Christs fold by election, that have wandred astray all their dayes, and are not yet brought home: of these Christ speaks, *John* 10. 16. *Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voyce; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepheard.* Those, though according to election they belong to the Church, yet they are without till conversion. *Revel.* 22. 15. *Without are dogs.* Men may put all together, but God when he comes to gather a Church, he tells you, there shall be some without. Though God have a Church in the world, yet the world is not of the Church. Christ will seek these sheep out, wherever they wander.

2. He brings home such as stray from the fold. How he brings in unconverted ones.

2. There are another sort of sheep, which are brought home, but are subject to wander and go astray, subject to backsliding, and these Christ will also seek: and these two shall be the bounds of our discourse.

1. Those who are yet strangers, Gods sheep by election, and not yet brought home.

How doth Christ seek these, who are not yet converted? For clearing this, I shall lay down six conclusions.

1. He takes notice of them all.

First, the Lord Jesus is acquainted with all the Fathers Decrees concerning men and Angels: he himself had a hand in them: and therefore he saith, *I speak not of you all, I know whom I have chosen,* John 13. 18. He is the Fathers Counsellor, or as the *Sueptagint* renders it, *The Angel of the Great Counsel*; He it is to whom God gave all his sheep, therefore it is said, *he calleth his own sheep by name,* John 10. 3. what is that? you have the like expression, *Exod.* 33. 12. *God sayes to* Moses, *I know thee by name*; the meaning is, God took a particular and exact knowledge of him, it was an act of love and approbation:

probation: so doth Jesus Christ take a particular and exact knowledge of his sheep. Thine they were, saith Christ to the Father, and thou gavest them me. Jesus Christ knew from eternity all that should be saved by him; therefore as the Father hath a book of life, so the Lamb hath a book of life too. *Revel.* 13. 8. *All that dwell on the earth shall worship him* (the beast) *whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.* It is a mighty place, that in *Exod.* 28. 29. *The High Priest must bear the names of the children of* Israel *in the breastplate of judgement, upon his heart, when he goeth into the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually.* There is not one soul of you that God had an everlasting good will unto, but your names were written in Christs heart from all eternity.

Secondly, There is a time when these souls shall be actually ingrafted into Christ. A man may be given to Christ in election, and yet be a stranger to Christ as to implantation; the one is a work without you, the other within you: *They are dead in sins till they be quickened together with Christ*, Eph. 2. 5. Now there is a time when every soul shall be actually given to Christ, who were given to him in election; they are not all brought in together, some in the parable went into the Vineyard at the sixth, some at the nineth, and some at the eleventh hour. God brought in *John* in his youth, *Paul* in his middle age, *Nicodemus* in his old age, but all shall be brought in at their time, and till that time come, Ministers may preach, and labour in vain; men may have many works wrought upon them, and yet become Apostates till he come, who hath the key of *David*, and open the heart. Christ knows this time, it is the time appointed by the Father. 2. He takes the fit time.

Thirdly, When that time comes, it belongs to Christ, and he looks upon it as a duty, that those who are given him should be brought in: *Other sheep* (saith he) *I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring in*, John 10. 16. It is spoken of the Gentiles, them I must bring in; it is his duty, he looks on it as a thing he must do, not only *ratione dominii*, but *officii*, not barely as that which would encrease his flock, but as that which was his office. See the business Christ hath to do in the world, *Cant.* 6. 2. *My beloved is gone down into his* 3. He doth it as his duty.

garden to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather Lillies. Then Christ hath a double business among you, those who are already gathered, the Lord delights in them; and those who are not gathered, he gathers them: so the people of God are called, *Lillies among thorns*, Cant. 2. 2. then Christ will gather them when the time comes.

4. More in some ages then in others.

Fourthly, Though the Lord hath sought out some of his sheep in all ages, yet some ages are more fruitful then others. Look into the time when Christ came in the flesh, *Matth.* 9. 37, 38. *He said unto his Disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth more labourers into his harvest:* the harvest, what is that? Christ spake of the multitude of them that were to be converted in that age; but especially the great income of the flock of Christ, the Lord hath reserved to the last dayes. Look into *Ezek.* 47. 10. *Their fishers shall stand upon it, they shall be a place to spread forth nets, and their fish shall be according to their kind, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many.* He speaks of the waters that issue out of the Sanctuary, and he saith, the fishes that shall be taken in them, that is, the multitude of Converts, shall be as the fishes of the great sea, exceeding many.

5. He seeks them earnestly.

Fifthly, Christ as a Shepheard doth seek these souls earnestly, heartily; as the price of his own blood, the joy of his own heart, and as the return of his own prayers. It is the price of his blood, the conversion of souls; that wherein he sees the travel of his soul, and it is not to be slighted, the blood of Christ can be put to no other use. The Angels need Christ as a Mediator of Confirmation; the devils cannot have benefit by him: what use then can there be of the blood of Christ, but for the gathering of souls? Christ had but little joy on earth, *He was a man of sorrows*, Isa. 53. 3. wherein did that joy which he had consist? *I have meat to eat that ye know not of: my meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work*, Joh. 4. 32, 34. he was converting souls, and that was his meat and drink. *In that hour Jesus rejoyced in Spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth*, Luke 10. 21. What was it for? he had sent out his Disciples, and the Church was increased, the devil was cast down, and this he rejoyced in: and

and it is the return of his prayers: *I pray not, saith he, for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word*, John 17. 20. What do you think, when Christ made his prayer on the Cross: *Father forgive them*: and when so many of those poor souls were converted, how did it fill his heart with joy?

Sixthly, Christ seeks these souls by using all means, and removing all impediments of their recovery: the ordinary means is the preaching of the Gospel, and he lights up his candle everywhere to seek his lost groats, *Cant.* 4.2. *Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing: whereof every one bears twins, and there is none barren among them*: It is spoken of Ministers, who are compared to teeth, that prepare meat for the whole body. So Christ goes forth in the Ministry of the Word, for seeking of souls, that is the ordinary means. But the occasional wayes that Christ takes, they are infinite: if you go down into your hearts, and examine what strange wayes Christ took to find you out, you will say so. ——— As,

6. He useth means, and removes impediments.

Sometimes God layes on an affliction, and then you are taken, *As the wild ass, in her moneth you may find her*, Jer. 2. 24. He layes on a Cross. He brings you into the wilderness, and then he speaks to the heart, *Hos.* 2. 14. Many a soul may say, happy me! that ever such a cross befell me. *Waldo* saw a man fall down dead before his eyes, and this accident God made a means of this mans conversion, who was the first of those *Waldenses*; so it is reported of *Julius* an Atheist, that his Father laid a Bible every where for him, and one day opening it occasionally, he lighted on the first Chapter of *Johns* Gospel, and there fell such an awe upon his spirit, that he was converted from his Atheism. Sometimes God doth it by setting his people on work to pray for him; so *Augustine*, God stirred up his Mother *Monicha* to pray so earnestly for him, that *Ambrose* said, *Non potest filius tantarum lachrymarum perire*. It is not possible a son of so many prayers and tears should perish: several occasional and secret means the Lord useth to bring in souls: and in seeking them he removes all impediments, *He casts out the strong man armed that keeps the house*, Luke 11.22. He answers all reasonings, *pulls down strong*

holds, casting down reasonings, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. And there be three wayes that Christ useth in removing the hindrances to his peoples conversion, but they be mighty ones. One you have *Revel.* 16. 12. *The sixth Angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up.* What is meant by the river *Euphrates*? cast your eye on *Isa.* 8. 7. and *Isa.* 11. 15, 16. you will see by the river, is meant the people and Kingdoms bounded by that river. Now as that was the *Assyrian* Monarchy then, so it is the Turkish Monarchy now. And the Lord saith, that great river shall be dryed up. What, will the Lord destroy such a mighty people? surely it is for some great work; the text tells you, it is that the way of the Kings of the East may be prepared: he dryes up the mighty river *Euphrates* to make way for the conversion of his people the Jews.

Another you have in *Zac.* 14. 4. the Lord saith, when he shall come to convert his people. *His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before* Jerusalem *on the East, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the East and toward the West, and there shall be a very great valley, and half the Mountain shall remove toward the North, and half of it toward the South.* Rivers dried up, and Mountains cleave in sunder! what strange things are these? *Jerusalem* stood in a valley, it was therefore called the valley of vision; the Mount of Olives hindered the prospect and glory of it: the Lord saith, he will remove all impediments, though it be a great mountain: but there is a greater then all this in *Revel.* 20. *And the Sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them.* You will apply this to the last resurrection, but weigh it with other places. Look into *Ezek.* 37. where you have the State of *Jerusalem*, compared to dry bones, and their Conversion called a Resurrection. So *Rom.* 11. 15. *If the casting away of them* (that is, the Jews) *be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?* so I take that place to be understood, *Dan.* 12. 2. *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake: some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.* Then these poor dead souls; if you be as dead men in Sea, earth or wilderness, where-

where-ever you are, Christ will look you out; neither Sea nor earth shall hold them back. These be the great grounds that uphold us in preaching: We that be fishers know not where the great shoal of fishes lie; but the Lord Jesus Christ, he takes his word in our mouths, and he makes use of it to catch these souls, and he will remove all impediments. Our word is like rain, and it sinks presently, and we see no sign of it: or it is sometimes as snow that lyes a while. Men may live under our Ministry many years, and we see no fruit; but Christ will come in his time, and one may sow, and another reap; but when God removes one, he leaves such impressions on mens spirits, that stick upon them, and rise up under anothers labours. Jesus Christ will in his time gather in all that are not yet converted which belong to the election of grace, he will seek them out.

Secondly, Those of Gods people that have been brought home to Gods fold and are gone astray, the Lord Jesus seeks them out in their wandrings: there is a principle in every one to draw back to perdition, *Heb.* 10. 39. but when souls are backsliden, the Lord Jesus Christ seeks out these. 2. How he brings home wanderers.

Here we shall first shew the danger of such a way of sinning, in wandering from Christ when a soul is brought home: and secondly, that such sinners, though it be the highest way of sinning, yet Christ will seek them out, for he is the great Shepheard.

The greatness of the sin appears in that,

1. It is the highest and most provoking way of sinning, next to the sin against the holy Ghost: this grieves the Spirit: others sins do anger God, yours do grieve him, *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God:* what, cut the heart of *Cæsar?* καὶ σὺ τεχνὸν, and thou my son? so the sins of none so grieve the Spirit as yours do. The danger of wandering from Christs fold.

2. It is such a way of sinning, as the soul hath no mind to return, *such a soul thinks on God and is troubled*, Psal. 77. 3. *Erubescit conscientia, erubescit. Oratio:* he cannot come to pray, but still the guilt ariseth; he comes into the presence of God as a Malefactor, and no wonder if he have no mind to come. *Oratio de conscientiâ procedit. Si conscientia erubescit, erubescit Oratio—Si Spiritus Reus apud te sit, erubescit conscientia.* Tert. Exhort. Castit. c. 10.

3. No

3. No sin so frightens the conscience as this. You know in what condition *Spira* was, when he had apostatized from God.

4. There is no sin harder to get a pardon for, or to get assurance of pardon. *David* having backsliden and returned to folly, oh what roarings, what breaking of bones doth he complain of! God set him as it were on the Rack, before he could arrive to assurance that he was pardoned.

5. There is no sin God visits with more terrible judgements; sometimes with desertion he hides his face, sometimes with other spiritual judgements, *O Lord* (cryes the backsliden Church) *why hast thou made us to err from thy wayes? and hardened our hearts from thy fear*, Isa. 63. 17. all these shew the danger of wandering. But though it is true, backsliding is like relapsing into a disease, which is alway dangerous; yet through the goodness of God it is not alway deadly. Christ is the good Shepheard, he tells the wandrings of his sheep, and will seek them out: and this he doth these six wayes.

How Christ reduceth wanderers.

1. By afflictions

1. Sometimes he doth it by laying afflictions on them, chastisments upon their loyns, that is the rule. Hear how God speaks of backsliders, *Hos.* 2. 6,7. *I will hedge up thy way with thorns; and make up a wall, that she shall not find her paths: and she shall follow her lovers, but she shall not overtake them: she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return unto my first husband, for then it was better with me then now:* the greatest mercy next to be preserved from sin, is to be crossed in a way of sin. God way-layes them, that they shall meet with difficulties.

2. Withdrawing his presence.

2. If afflictions will not do it, the Lord delivers such a man over to Satan by a spiritual excommunication: the Lord deals with such a man, as the Church did with the incestuous *Corinthian*; he gives him up to Satan, who flyes upon him with violence to swallow him up. As the Sacraments of the Church are seals of the promise, so the censures of the Church are seals of the threatening; that is another way God deals with his to reclaim them. Thus God used *David*, which made him cry out, *cast me not away from thy presence.*

3. By quickning their graces.

3. Sometimes he doth it by quickening spiritual graces in them,

them, the principle of grace in their souls then, when they are in a way of sinning, and that brings them back again. See it in the Church, *My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were mourned for him*, Cant. 5. 4. *I opened unto my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself.* How did Christ withdraw himself? in respect of his external and sensible manifestation, yet he left a divine impression on her heart; though he withdraws himself in respect of comfort, he quickens the inward man, and the soul purges out the mud again.

4. The Lord reduceth a wandring soul, by stirring up in him the remembrance of the sweetness of his former condition, *It was better then with me*, saith the Church, *then it is now*, Hos. 2. 7. they remember that intercourse and communion they formerly had with God. How many a soul is perplexed to consider, time was, when I could think on God with comfort and delight: now the thoughts of God are dreadful to me; time was, when I could have come before him with boldness: now I come as a malefactor before a Judge. I could have conversed with God in duty, but now I perform duty indeed, but I am haled to it. I could have looked on death with cheerfulness: now by reason of the fear of death, I am all my life-long under bondage: time was, when I could have enjoyed the creatures as my servants by vertue of Christs purchase: now I can converse with none of them, but I have guilty thoughts: to bring back your thoughts to consider how good the old way was, is a special means to let you see the folly of desiring new.

4. By remembring the sweetness of their former condition.

5. God stirs up the bowels of his faithful people to pray for such; the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and reduce the wanderer too. So the Spouse, *O ye daughters of* Jerusalem, *if ye find my beloved, tell him that I am sick of love*, Cant. 5. 8. God useth the same way to reduce a wandring soul, that he doth to repair a desolate Church. *Thou wilt arise and have mercy on* Sion: what is the argument of the Psalmist? *it pitteth thy servants to see her lye in the dust*, Psal. 102. 14. All this is Christs seeking still. *Isa.* 57. 18. *I have seen his way, and I will heal him*: there was one restored; and what was the end of it? *I will restore comforts to him, and to his mourners.*

5. By stirring up others to pray for them.

6. By some discoveries of his love.

6. Sometimes the Lord is pleased to fall on the soul by discoveries of his love, to let him see the greatness of electing love, nothing can go beyond that. God sometimes falls on his neck when he is in a way of sinning: so in the forenamed, *Isa.* 57. 17. *I was wroth and smote him, I hid me and was wroth.* All this God did to reclaim the man, but he went on stubbornly in the way of his own heart. What saith God, *I have seen his way and I will heal him*; this melts the man. When *Peter* had denyed Christ shamefully, *the Lord doth but look back*, and Peter *goes out and weeps bitterly*: one such look is able to regain a soul. By all this it appears, Christ is the great Shepheard of the sheep, he seeks out those that are not yet brought home, and those who wander and go astray: that is the first part of Christs office as a Shepheard, he seeks the flock. Consider what hath been said all ye backsliders, who have been brought home to the flock of Christ, and yet wander again.

II. Christ feeds his sheep.

The Lord having thus sought out and brought back again his sheep, either from a state of estrangement altogether, or from backsliding, *having found it, and laid it on his shoulder, rejoycing*, Luk. 15. 5. he doth not beat him, but bear him home, which notes *laborem cum amore*. The next act he performs as a Shepheard is; He feeds the sheep. Take two places for the proof of it, one is *Isa.* 40. 11. *He shall feed his flock like a Shepheard:* and the other is that in *Ezek.* 34. 23. *I will set up, saith God, one Shepheard over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant* David, *he shall feed them, and he shall be their Shepheard.* *David* was dead long before, therefore necessarily it must be spoken of the Lord Jesus Christ the son of *David*, *he shall feed them, and he shall be their Shepheard.* Feeding in Scripture is taken largely for all the office of a Shepheard, but we shall take it here strictly, and in it shall shew,

1. The person, who it is that feeds the flock.
2. The food by which he feeds, and the nature of it.
3. The manner of Christs feeding his flock.

Christ is the chief Shepheard.

First, For the person, there is under God immediately but one Shepheard. So the Lord saith, *I will set up one Shepheard over them*, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ; but under Jesus Christ there are many Shepheards; and as Christ shall give his accompt to his Father, so all other shepheards shall give an accompt

accompt to Christ. *Feed the flock of God, taking the oversight of them,* saith the Apostle to those subordinate shepheards, 1 *Pet.* 5. 2.

Now there are two sorts of shepheards under Christ; Magistrates and Ministers.

Magistrates and Ministers are Shepheards under him.

1. Magistrates are Shepheards, and it is their duty to feed the flock. *Then he remembred the dayes of old,* Moses *and his people, saying, where is he that brought them up out of the Sea with the Shepheard of his flock,* Isa. 63. 11. *Moses* is there called a shepheard. And that is a known place: *That saith of* Cyrus, *He is my shepheard,* Isa. 44. 28. Consider this all that are called to place of Authority. The Lord requires that Magistrates feed the flock these three wayes.

Magistrates duty.

1. To provide for the Ordinances.

1. By providing that the Ordinances of God should be sent abroad to all the flock: this was *Jehosaphats* care; *He sent to his Princes to teach in the Cities of* Judah, *and with them he sent Levites and Priests,* 2 Chron. 17. 7, 8. And it is your duty to encourage those who are sent forth: Thus did *Hezekiah* feed the flock, 2 *Chron.* 30. 22. Hezekiah *spake comfortably to all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the Lord.*

2. To support the Saints.

Secondly, By comforting and supporting the Saints of God among you; the tenderest feeding that God expects from you, is to them: the Promise to them is, *Kings shall be thy nursing Fathers, and their Queens thy nursing Mothers,* Isa. 49. 23. It is dangerous for those who should be Nurses and Shepheards, to become Lyons to tear, and wolves to devour the Sheep.

3. To remove hindrances of nourishment.

Thirdly, By endeavouring to take away whatever impediment there is that hinders their nourishment, I commend unto you that place, *Cant.* 2. 15. *Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.* You may understand it either of subtile persecutors, that pretend to build with you, when their intention is to destroy you: or of secret hereticks, corrupters of the truths of God, *Habitu oves, astu vulpes, actu lupi*; so *Bernard* describes them, who though they go in sheeps clothing, yet for their craft are foxes, and actually wolves. Your care must be to reclaim them, or to restrain them. And oh! that God would pour out that Spirit of love on us that was in that same holy man. Oh!

Utinam omnes adversantes mihi ita capere possem, ut Christo restituam, that should be the Magistrates care.

2. Ministers duty.

Ministers they are shepheards under Christ, and their duty is, *to feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood*, Acts 20. 28. on whom that charge must needs lye heavy. Simon Peter, *lovest thou me? feed my sheep.* Now it is of such that Christ makes that bitter complaint. *Matth* 9.36. *When he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepheard.* There is some difference in the reading in the Greek Copies, some Copies read ἐκλελυμένοι, *defatigati*: they were wearied, tired out with a dull and untoward Ministry: others render it, *dissipati*, so Mr. *Beza*, they were scattered abroad to seek for better teaching; and the Lord seeing what a miserable thing it is, for a people to live under a dull Ministry, *he had compassion on them, and he taught them many things*: so you have it in *Mark* 6. 34. *When shepheards prove Idol shepheards, no wonder if the sword be upon their arm, and upon their right eye*, Zach. 11. 17. *no wonder if their right arm wither, and their right eye be darkened.* But whether you be Magistrates or Ministers, Christ the great Shepheard hath committed his flock to you to keep, and if you feed not the flock, remember the threatning, *Jerem.* 23. 15. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts concerning the Prophets: I will feed them with wormwood, and make them to drink the water of gall.* When the great Shepheard of the sheep shall appear, let these shepheards look to it, they shall give an accompt how they have fed the flock. Now though by both these Christ feed his sheep, yet this is a peculiar act of Christs; it is he that feeds the flock. Look into that Scripture, *Cant.* 1. 7, 8. *Tell me*, saith the Church, *O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon?* Christ answers in the next verse. *If thou knowest not, O thou fairest among women; Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepheards tents*: it is by these shepheards tents that Christ feeds the flock. So much for the person, who it is that feeds.

The food wherewith Christ feeds his flock.

We come in the next place, to shew what kind of food it is that Christ feeds his flock withall. By food in Scripture is understood

derstood whatsoever a mans comfort comes in by; so you may see by those places, *Prov.* 4. 17. *They eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.* Prov. 15. 14. *The mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.* So *Isa.*44. 20. *He feedeth on ashes.* Hos. 12. 1. Ephraim *feedeth on wind.* So all uncertain comforts, and vain hopes are called. So then Christ is said to feed us by that, whereby our hope is upheld, and the comforts of our life come in. And you may see the nature of this food in six particulars.

1. That which Christ feeds his flock with, is pretious food. 1. Pretious food. *To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God*, Revel. 2. 7. you cannot have better feeding. You know the great judgement on *Adam*, was, he was cast out of Paradise, and an Angel placed there to keep the way of the tree of life; now by Christ this priviledge is restored: compare this with *Revel.* 22. 14. *Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life.* That is, right to eat of it, this priviledge to be admitted into Paradise again. You cannot have better feeding, then for God to take you, and set you into Paradise again, and feed you with the tree of life.

2. It is pleasant food. *He maketh me to lie down in green pastures,* נאות that signifies, budding pastures, that is the pleasant feeding: *Herba virens & tenera*, budding and tender grass. *Psal.* 23. 2. *And he leads me forth by the waters of comfort*, what is that? there is a mighty emphasis in the words of regiment, as this is: as you may see in other places, *Job* 11. 2. *Should a man full of talk be justified?* it is *vir labiorum*, a man of lips. So *Prov.* 29. 1. *He that being often corrected*, it is *vir correctionum*, a man of corrections. So our Saviour is stiled *vir dolorum*, a man of sorrows, Isa. 53. 3. That is, full of them, his life was made up of nothing else. So here, waters of comfort, it notes wonderful comforts, their souls shall be satisfied, as with marrow and fatness: *They shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more: the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water*, Revel. 7. 16, 17. The soul must needs have great pleasure in this, that it feeds on budding grass, and drinks of waters of comfort. 2. Pleasant food.

3. Plentiful. 3. It is plentiful as well as pleasant food. So *Isa.* 25. 6. *In this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things: a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined:* here are all dainties that can be, and it cannot be a feast, unless there be plenty too. The Lord when he feeds his people doth it with plenty, *Eat O friends; drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved,* Cant. 5. 1.

4. Suitable. 4. Christ feeds his sheep with suitable food, suitable to their nature, and to the degree of their life. 1. Suitable to their nature. Whereever life is, it desires food suitable: beasts and plants have their food, men of the world they have a life too, and they have food that perisheth, *John* 6. 27. and this is an argument of the baseness of any life, when it is maintained with food that is below it self, so are plants, and beasts, and natural men nourished with food below them; but the souls of the Saints are nourished with food from above, and this sets forth the worth of souls. Christ feeds his with food suitable to their life, which is from above. 2. With food suitable to the degree of their life, *He hath milk for babes, and meat for strong men,* Heb. 5. 13, 14. Cant. 7. 2. *Thy navel is like a round goblet which wanteth not liquor: thy belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lillies.* There are two sorts of children in the Church, there are some *Embrio's*, and they are nourished by the Navel, and there are others that are brought forth and fit for stronger meat, the Lord hath provided an heap of wheat for them: there are in the Church wise and weak; the babes must not be so fed with milk, as that grown men should be fed with nothing but milk. *Jesus Christ bids us to divide the word aright,* 2 Tim. 2. 15. give each one his proper meat: so doth Christ.

1. To their nature.

2. To the degree of their life.

5. Prepared. 5. He feeds his flock with prepared food; *Thou hast spread a table for me, prepared a table for me in the presence of mine enemies,* Psal. 23. 5. And all the food that we the servants of Christ bring, if he do not prepare it before hand, it will not nourish. All the food he prepares, is for the flock. Ministers are compared unto teeth, *Cant.* 4. 2. because *dentium funguntur munere:* they do the office of teeth, which is, to prepare the meat, that it may be fit to be received into the body for nourishment. Christ feeds us, that we may be able to feed you.

you. *Who comforteth us* (saith the Apostle) *in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any trouble, by the comforts wherewith we our selves are comforted of God*, 2 Cor. 1. 4. Gods Ministers are left to many temptations, trials, doubtings, that they may be the better able to minister counsel and relief to others in such conditions.

6. The food with which Christ feeds his sheep, is immortal food. As the seed by which they are begotten is so, *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever*, 1 Pet. 1. 23. not by the bare Word written in the book, but by the Word turned into grace in the heart: so the food by which they are nourished, *is food that endureth to everlasting life*, John 6. 27. So then when Christ comes as a Shepheard to feed his flock, this, and of this nature is the food he feeds them with, it is food thus qualified: and what is the food? it is spiritual food, and that I shall give you in these branches. 6. Immortal.

1. He gives you himself to feed on; he saith, *I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst*, John 6. 25. and in *ver.* 51. *the bread that I will give you is my flesh.* Now what is it to eat the flesh of Christ, and to drink his blood? It is to close with Christ made flesh, in a work of faith, as being made a sacrifice for sin, and tendered to sinners in the Gospel, and to imbrace him as he is so tendered. He gives you thus himself to feed on. He feeds them, 1. With himself.

2. Christ feeds his sheep with Gospel-promises and Gospel-Ordinances. *I will feed thee with the heritage of* Jacob *thy Father*, Isa. 58. 14. what was *Jacobs* heritage? it was the Promise. You know who they be that are called heirs of the Promise, *Heb.* 6. 17. *the Promises are the Saints heritage*; the Prophet in another place calls them, *the sure mercies of* David. And by these Christ feeds his people. 2. With Gospel promises and ordinances.

3. The Lord feeds his people with the consolations of his Spirit. *To him that overcometh, I will give to eat of the hidden Manna*, Revel. 2. 17. The Ark was the fullest, and most glorious Type of Christ under the Law; in the Ark the pot of Manna was reserved; to note out unto us, that all nourishment is laid up in Christ. Now if God should have chosen 3. With the consolations of the Spirit.

out

out one man to have nourished him by that pot of Manna, it had been a high character set upon him of Gods singular love. Such a character God puts upon his Saints, he feeds them with hidden Manna, such comforts of the Spirit, as others are not acquainted with.

4. By his rod.

4. The Lord feeds his people by his rod: you have that expression; *Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage*, Mic. 7. 14. in the former verses, the Prophet had promised to the Church great things, in *ver.* 11. there is mention of the day in which her walls should be built; yet in *ver.* 13. the Lord threatens, *Nevertheless the land shall be desolate because of them that dwell therein, for the fruit of their doings*, and then in *ver.* 14. the Prophet comes in with a prayer: *Feed thy people with thy rod; give them a happy fruit, and a sanctified use of it*, and then in the next verse, God makes another gracious promise, *According to the daies of thy coming out of the land of Egypt, will I shew unto him marvellous things.* The feeding with the rod is none of the least mercies. *David* found comfort in it, *Thy rod and thy staffe they comfort me*, Psal. 23. 4. By this means, the sins of the people of God are purged. *Isa.* 27. 9. *By this shall the iniquity of* Jacob *be purged, and this shall be all the fruit, the taking away of his sin. He stayeth his rough wind in the day of his East wind.* In the former verse God moderates the affliction, and what is that for? why, this is the fruit, that their sin may be purged; that is one end, and then hereby their graces are mightily improved; *by afflictions they are made partakers of his holiness*, Heb. 12. 10. These clouds drop fatness, and though they make the way foul, yet they make the land fruitful.

5. With the fruits one of another.

5. Christ feeds his people with the fruits one of another, in *Ezek.* 47. 12. *There be trees that grow on the bank of the river on this side, and on that side, trees for meat*; and it is said, *their fruit shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine*: of the fruit that grows upon the Saints there is a double use, for strengthening some, and for reducing, sometimes for correcting others. So it is said, *Prov.* 10. 21. *The lips of the righteous feed many.* But especially look into *Zach.* 11. 7. *The Prophet takes to him the Instruments of a Shepheard*; what are they? *a staffe and a rod. I took unto me two staves, the one I called*

called Beauty, and the other I called Bands, and I fed the flock. How did he feed them with those two staves? what is the staffe of Beauty? that comely and decent order that God had set up among them. And what was the staffe of Bands? their mutual unity and agreement among themselves; and while these fruits did abide, they were fed by them; but when that order was broken, the staffe of Beauty was broken; and when they came to be divided, the staffe of Bands was broken.

Lastly, Christ feeds his flock by variety of Providences; *If any man enter in by me*, saith Christ, *he shall go in and out, and find pasture*, John 10. 9. going in and out sets forth all a mans waies, all the course of a mans life; in all these the sheep of Christ find pasture. *Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and when thou goest out*, Deut. 28. 6. So the Lord saith to *Zenacherib, I know thy going out and thy coming in*, 2 King. 19. 27. By all the passages of a mans life, the Lord undertakes to feed his people, whether they be their goings out, or their comings in. And the ground of all is, because Jesus Christ is made *the head over all to his Church*, Ephes. 1. 22. and on this ground it is, that all the people of God find nourishment in every Providence: and so you have the nature of the food, with which Christ nourisheth and feeds his flock: and so we come to shew the manner, how Christ feeds his flock: and that we shall speak to in these six heads. 6. By variety of providences. The manner how Christ feeds his flock.

1. Those whom Christ feeds, he feeds with compassion: that is the manner of his feeding; he layes that charge upon us in the Ministry, when we feed the flock; *we should do it, willingly and of a ready mind*, 1 Pet. 5. 2. but consider that place, *Ezek.* 34 31. *And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God.* There is a great emphasis in the expression, אדם אתם, ye are *Adam*, the work of my hands, I have no need of you, ye are sons of an Apostate Father, yet I will own you as my flock: it is an expression of tenderness and compassion, and so Christ feeds his sheep. 1. With compassion.

2. He feeds them with judgement. So you read, *Ezek.* 34. 16. *I will feed them with judgement*; that is, with wisdom and discretion: *for his Spirit is a Spirit of judgement*, Isa. 4 4. that is, he feeds you according to your necessities, as he sees 2. With judgement.

best for you. Sometimes he feeds you with the bread of tears, the bread of mourners; sometimes with hidden Manna; sometimes he feeds you as he did *Ezekiel*, with a roll of a book written within and without, lamentations, and mourning, and woe, *Ezek* 2. and sometimes as he fed *Jeremiah*, *Thy words were found and I did eat them, and they were unto me the joy and rejoycing of my heart*, Jer. 15. 16.

3. With new food daily.

3. He feeds them constantly and with new food every day, they are anoynted with fresh oyl, *Psal.* 92. 10. *He leads them forth into budding pastures, feeds them with fresh grass, he gives them the supplies of the Spirit of Jesus Christ*, Phil. 1. 19. This is the reason why the people of God are never weary of their food, there is satisfaction without satiety, because God gives them new food every day; many times new sweetness from old food: there were some truths you heard some years ago, and the Lord having cast you into some extremity, you find new comfort from those truths. God did put a difference between the beasts that did chew the cud, and those that did not. The Lord feeds his people many times by chewing over old truths, old experiences. You are to hear for the time to come; *When Jesus was risen from the dead, his Disciples remembred what he had said unto them long before; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said*, John 2. 22. now they chew the cud and tast a new sweetness. All these are the waies of Christ in feeding his sheep; and sometimes the saying of *Chrysostom* is true, that God gives in one word to a man that, which may be the food of his whole life.

4. In the wilderness.

4. The Lord feeds his people in the wilderness, *the woman* in *Revel.* 12. 6. *fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her for one thousand two hundred and sixty dayes.* There is a threefold state of the Church in the *Revelation*, the time of her being with child answerable to their being in *Egypt*; the time of her travel, which answers to their coming up from thence and passing through the wilderness; and the time of her deliverance, to their entring into *Canaan*. When God brought them into the wilderness he provides food for them; *Thou brakest the heads of Leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness*, Psal. 74. 14. It is spoken of the over-

overthrow of *Pharoah* and his Army; this mercy God gave them as food for their faith, when they came into the wilderness.

5. He feeds them in the strength of the Lord. *Mic.* 5. 4. it is a Prophesie of Christ, *and he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord*: that is, the strength of the Lord shall give power to food to nourish, and grace to digest: the food shall be very powerful for aliment, and mens graces very powerful to receive and concoct it. As your food, if Gods blessing be not with it, will turn to ill humours: so your Manna, without this will breed worms. *The rain that cometh down from heaven will make men breed, and bring forth briers and thorns, if it receive not blessing from God*, Heb. 6. 6, 7. Jesus Christ gives strength to the meat, and strength to the stomack to digest it. 5. In the strength of the Lord.

6. Christ so feeds his flock, as a double fruit flows from it; *strength and growth*: they grow strong by it, and they grow up in the strength of it. You upon whom the Sun of Righteousness shall arise, shall go forth and grow up as calves in the stall; growing up in stature, and going forth to labour: *As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby*, 1 Pet. 2. 2. This shall be the fruit of all Christs feeding, you shall have both strength and growth by it, *till you come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*, Eph. 4. 13. 6. To strength and growth.

Thus you see, how Christ doth perform the second act of a Shepheard to his flock, he feeds them.

And having thus sought out his flock and fed them, the third Act is, he takes care of them, in *John* 10. 13. Christ saith, *The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the flock*. Christ speaks in that Parable, of three sorts that undertake, or profess to undertake the care of the flock of God. You may understand it of shepheards, in the Magistracy and in the Ministry; some are thieves and robbers: *All that came before me*, (that came not in by me, who am the door) *are thieves and robbers*, ver. 8. such are false teachers and persecutors; *A stranger they will not follow, the sheep flee from him: for they know not the voyce of strangers*, ver. 5. *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy*, v. 10. III. Christ takes care of his flock.

Others that pretend to take care of the flock are hirelings: that do what they do *stipendii causâ*, barely what may stand with the good of the flock and their own too. But then thirdly, there is the good Shepheard, whereof Christ propounds himself for a pattern; and he saith, *the hireling when danger comes, he fleeth, because he is an hireling: and careth not for the sheep*: But the good Shepheard, as he doth not destroy the flock, as the thief and the robber, nor leave the flock to danger as the hireling doth: *so he giveth his life for the sheep*, v. 11. This is made one great character of a Bishop, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. *that he should be vigilant*, and if he require it of under Bishops, he who is the great Bishop of souls will not neglect it.

In opening this, to uphold our hearts, especially in these times, when a godly man may say as *David* did, *none careth for my soul*, and therefore we had need to have such a prop as this to stay our souls, that Christ takes care of his sheep, we shall shew you how he doth it. 1. In his dispensations for the present. 2. In his preparations for the future.

1. As to present dispensations

As to his dispensations for the present, his care is seen in six things.

1. For their instruction.

1. He takes care for the instruction of the flock: to this end he hath written to you the great things of his Law, he hath opened to you the bosome of his Father, discovered his Fathers Counsels, *and speaks from heaven to you every day by his Ministers*, Heb. 12. 25. *gives gifts to men*, Ephes. 4. 8. *thrusts forth labourers into his harvest*, Matth. 9. 38. Nay he appoints these where they shall bestow their labours. Ministers come not of themselves: *He holds the seven stars* (the Angels of the Churches) *in his right hand*, Revel. 1. 16. he appoints them the Orbe where they shall shine, nay he puts into them a spirit to take care of you, the care of Ministers for you is a fruit of the care of Christ, *Thanks be unto God* (saith the Apostle writing to the *Corinthian* believers) *that put the same earnest care into the heart of* Titus *for you*, 2 Cor. 8. 16. So he saith of *Timothy*, *I have no man like minded, who will naturally care for your state*, Phil. 2. 20. hence it is, that Ministers are called Fathers and Nurses, which are *nomina pietatis*, as well as *potestatis*: and that there is in any of them such a disposition, is a fruit of the care of Jesus Christ. Nay he concurs with them in their Ministry,

nistry, he not only gifts them for it, but goes with them in it. *We are Ambassadors for Christ, as if God did beseech you by us*, 2 Cor. 5. 20. he speaks by them, and in them: if any be converted; why, saith the Apostle, *ye are the Epistle of Christ ministred by us*, 2 Cor. 3. 3. if any be comforted, *it is Jesus Christ that creates the fruit of the lips, peace*, Isa. 57. 19. The gifts we have, we cannot look on them, as gifts infused immediately as the Apostles were; there would be no need then of that charge, *Give attendance to reading*, 1 Tim. 4. 13. But if you look on the Ministers gifts only, as *dona acquisita*, acquired, so they will do you little good: but as they are *dona sanctificata*, gifts sanctified, so they serve for your good. *Ye are Christs Epistle ministred by us.* It is Christs care. And when God hath set up the Ministry in any place for the good of the people, if ungodly men prevail against them to put them out, God will raise them up again; the witnesses were slain, whether *physicè* or *metaphysicè*, as witnesses God raiseth them up again. So he doubles the spirit of *Elijah* upon *Elisha*: and all this is but the fruit of the care of Christ as your Shepheard.

2. He takes care to give his sheep a seasonable supply to all their wants. When the dough that was unleavened, that the people brought with them out of *Egypt* was spent, *then was the season for God to give Manna*, Exod. 16. when the Egyptian task-masters had increased the burdens, *cùm duplicantur lateres, venit Moses*; then a deliverer comes. When the Egyptians were come behind *Israel*, and the Sea before them, and Mountains on each side, *now* Israel *look for a supply, stand still and see the salvation of God. When the soul draweth near to the grave and his life to the destroyer, then comes a messenger one of a thousand, and saies, Deliver his soul from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom*, Job 33. 22, 23, 24. In the book of the *Revelations*, you have two things that are the main subject of it: *quæ sunt, & quæ ventura*: so saith the voyce, *write the things that are, and the things that shall be hereafter*, Revel. 1. 19. Now when Christ comes to set down the present state of the Church, he doth it by writing to the seven Churches of *Asia*. Why so? were there not other flourishing Churches? will the Lord take no care of them? why

2. For seasonable supply.

doth he not write to the Church at *Rome*, at *Corinth*, at *Philippi*? Interpreters give ſeveral grounds of it; one among the reſt is this. The Lord ſaw the Candleſtick was firſt to be removed from theſe Churches, they were firſt to be under the Cloud, and therefore applied a preſent remedy where the moſt imminent danger was; he takes care for a ſeaſonable ſupply.

3. Preſenting their perſons and ſervices to the Father.

3. The care of Chriſt is exerciſed in preſenting your perſons and ſervices to the Father. There is not one perſon converted, no not the meaneſt ſervant or pooreſt beggar, but Chriſt takes care to tender him to the Father. There is not a good thought in your heart, not an holy ſigh or groan, but he takes care to preſent it to the Father. Theſe are great grounds of Faith. Jeſus Chriſt is gone to heaven, but hath he forgotten us? no, he bears the ſame mind towards us that ever he did, *he is entred into heaven it ſelf, now to appear in the preſence of God for us*, Heb. 9. 24. he appears there for us as an Attourny for his Clyent, he bears our names before the Lord upon his two ſhoulders for a memorial; *Exod.* 28. 12. *The high Prieſt as a type of Chriſt, had the names of the children of* Iſrael *written upon him twice, on the breſt-plate, and on the Ephod*: ſome ſay, the one is to ſhew Chriſts tender affection to his people, your names are written upon his heart; and the other to ſhew his preſentation of them to the Father. So the High Prieſt was to bear them on his ſhoulders for a memorial. And he takes care alſo to preſent your ſervices; look into *Revel.* 1. 13, 14. where Jeſus Chriſt is deſcribed as in heaven, for it was after his Aſcenſion many years, *and he is cloathed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.* In heaven whatſoever ſuppoſeth ſin or ſhame ſhall be done away, there ſhall be no nakedneſs to your ſhame, that ſhall need a garment there. Why then is Chriſt ſaid to have a garment? Chriſt is ſet forth as wearing his Prieſtly garments. So that though he be gone to heaven and hath left the Altar of burnt offering behind him, he dies no more, yet he ſtands by the Altar of incenſe to this very day. So *Rev.* 8. 3. *Another Angel came and ſtood at the Altar, having a golden cenſer, and there was given unto him much incenſe, that he ſhould offer it with the prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar, which*

which was before the throne; and the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the Saints, ascended up before God, out of the Angels hand. So then Jesus Christ, he presents your services, perfumes them with his odours, and mixes them with his incense, and so tenders them up unto the Father.

4. Christ exerciseth his care in his protection and preservation of you. If danger come, he marks out some for deliverance: so you read in *Ezek.* 9. *The man clothed in linnen with a writers Ink horn by his side, he set a mark upon the foreheads of them who were to be spared.* When *Jerusalem* was to be destroyed, and the charge is given to the men with the slaughter weapons, the instruments of vengeance; *Go ye after him through the City and smite, let not your eye spare, neither have you pity: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark*, ver. 4, 5. an expression like to that in *Isa.* 4. 3. every one that is written to life in *Jerusalem.* Who be those, that in a general judgement are preserved? those, whom the man with the writers Ink-horn did write to life. Sometimes he lets them fall into affliction, but then he snatches them, *as brands out of the burning*, Zach. 3. 2. sometimes he brings them to the brink of mischief, and then saves them. When *David* was at the brink of ruine, *Saul* and his men, having compassed *David* and his men round about to take him; *then comes a messenger to* Saul, *Haste thee and come, for the Philistines have invaded the land*, and so *Saul* retires and *David* escapes, 1 *Sam.* 23. 26, 27. *Nebuchadnezzar* comes up against *Jerusalem*, and there comes a rumor that calls him another way; and if the Lord suffer them to fall into affliction, he puts under *the everlasting arms*, Deut. 33. 27. he takes care for their preservation.

4. Protecting and preserving them.

5. He takes care to avenge their cause, and destroy their enemies, he defeats their plots, and turns their policy into foolishness, that is a fruit of his care, *Zach.* 1. 20, 21. *He provides four Carpenters to fray the horns that had scattered his people, to cast out the horn of the Gentiles, that lift up their horn over the land of* Judah *to scatter it.* Here is the care of God for them; answerable to their trouble, such is their deliverance: look to that in *Acts* 7. 56, 57. *When* Stephens *enemies were enraged and gnashed on him with their teeth, then* Stephen *full*

5. Avenging their cause.

full of the holy Ghost looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. We read in *Mark* 16. 19. *That Christ was received up into heaven, and sate on the right hand of God:* how comes it then that Christ is here said to stand? to stand in Scripture phrase is to plead ones cause, to appear for ones help. *Bring forth the shield and buckler, draw out the spear, stand up for my help,* Psal. 35. 2, 3. that is, appear to help me. When God enables his people to look up with an eye of Faith to Jesus Christ, they see him standing up to their help. Look into the *Revelations*, you will find Christ there described several wayes; in the first Chapter, you have him in his Priestly garments; in the fourteenth Chapter, he is set out *with a golden Crown on his head, and in his hand a sharp sickle*; in the nineteenth Chapter, *ver.* 11, 12. *He is sitting upon a white horse his eyes like a flame of fire, and on his head many crowns:* all different descriptions. Christ had not different bodies, why is he then represented in different shapes? on no other ground, but that he might suit the Churches necessities. When he was to take vengeance on their enemies, then he is described as treading the wine-press. When he is to fight against them, then as a King riding forth conquering, and to conquer. When to intercede for his Saints, then as a Priest. What ever he be, he will be described to be all for the good of his Church; and therefore we should be encouraged. *Prorsus desperassem si Christus non esset caput Ecclesiæ*; but he is the head of the Church, and the head over all to his Church: and therefore she need not despair. Let men say what they will, let them cry, a confederacy, a confederacy, the comfort of a Christian is, *vivit Christus, regnat Christus*; Christ lives, and he raigns.

6. Turning the evil intended by their enemies to their good.

6. His care is seen in this, that what the enemy doth intend for evil, that he turneth to his Churches good, *Mic.* 4. 12. Many Nations gathered themselves against the Church, and they did it with an intention to thresh the people of God. But what saith the Lord? *they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they his counsel: for he shall gather them as sheaves into the floor. Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion.* Where they did seek the Churches overthrow, they shall find their own: is this the Churches care? no, it is Christs care, he gathers

thers them as sheaves into the floor. When *Paul* was cast into prison, the enemy thereby intended to hinder the Gospel: but it proved otherwise, *the things which have fallen out to me* (saith the Apostle) *have proved rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel*, Phil. 1. 12. Gods people pray for the destruction of Antichrist: he thinks himself never so sure, as when he kills the witnesses, but that shall hasten his ruine: for immediately on their resurrection, *the tenth part of the City falls*, Revel. 11. *Crudelitas vestra, illecebra Christianorum*, as one speaks, the enemies cruelty shall add to their glory; the more you mow, the more they will grow; all this is the care of Christ, because *the government is upon his shoulder*. In our dayes, opposition to godliness in the power of it grows high, but consider the Lord is by all this making way, that *new* Jerusalem *may come down from God out of heaven*: and when men have done their worst, out of all these hammerings, *Ezekiels* Temple shall be built; let men oppose godliness never so much, *the City lieth four-square, the length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal*, Rev. 21. 16. the wall of the new *Jerusalem* is equal in height to the breadth of it. There will be no way then for men to climb into the Church; no way but at the gate. Now in the two and twentieth Chapter, and the fifteenth verse, *without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lye*: why are these without? because the wall is so high, and the gate is shut. Though as Ordinances are now dispenced, they want that Majesty they should have, prophane men thrust in: but then, as the Apostle saith, *of the rest none durst joyn*, so it shall be in that Church; and all these hammerings at present do but make way for this glorious building of the new *Jerusalem*, and men shall not hinder it; and this is the care of Christ in his dispensations for the present.

2. He doth exercise his care also in his preparations for the future.

2. His preparations for the future.

1. If any evil be to come upon his people; Christ prepares them, and gives them warning before hand. Noah *being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark to the saving of his house*, Heb. 11. 7. what was the reason the Lord Christ comes to the antient of dayes, and took

1. Preparing and forewarning them of evil.

the book with seven seals out of his hand, and opened it, and out of it hath told you the story of all that shall come to pass? It was Christs care, that no affliction should befall the people of God, but they should be warned of it before hand, that they might have something to uphold their spirits under it.

2. Providing for their necessities before they feel them.

2. He provides for their necessities before they feel them. When our blessed Saviour was to go to heaven, he knew his Disciples would want his bodily presence, and therefore before they think of it, he tells them, *When I depart, I will send you the Comforter*, John 16. 7. why doth Christ make this promise? it was to comfort them against the fear of what would befall them through the absence of his bodily presence: there was a great famine to come on *Jacob* and his family: *Joseph* must be sent before into *Egypt* to provide food to keep his Father and brethren alive: was it *Jacobs* care? no, the Psalmist tells us, *God sent a man before, even* Joseph, *Psalm* 105. 17.

3. By crosses preventing their sin.

3. Sometimes he prepares crosses for them to prevent sin, when they do not imagine it. What a special act of care was that which Christ exercised toward *Paul*, when he sent him *a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, least he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of revelations*, 2 Cor. 12. 7. the Lord knew there was a disposition in the heart of *Paul* to be lifted up, and he provided this chastisement for the preventing of it: and if we look into our experiences, we shall find, the Lord suffers us to fall under such a cross, sometimes into such a sin, to prevent a worse evil.

4. Laying in consolations before hand.

4. He layes in consolations before hand, when evils are to come. God intended *David* should have experience of desertion, and therefore he gave him *songs in the night*, that he might call them to mind in such a time, *Psal.* 77. 6. So *Paul*, God intended he should be a man to bind up many a broken bone, and set them in joynt again, and therefore God comforted him in all *his tribulations, that he might be able to comfort others, with the comforts wherewith he was comforted of God*, 2 Cor. 1. 4.

5. Laying up prayers for them.

5. He layes up prayers for them before hand. *Peter* was to

to meet with a temptation. *Simon, Simon,* saith Christ, *Satan hath desired to winnow you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not,* Luk. 22. 31, 32. before the temptation came, Christ took care of *Peter,* and laid up a prayer for him.

6. He prepares glory for them before hand; *I go, saith he, to prepare a place for you, and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto my self, that where I am, there ye may be also,* John 14. 2, 3. Is there any thing in heaven that is not prepared? how can Christ be said to go to heaven to prepare a place for us? I understand the meaning of it to be, that there are acts of office for Christ to do in heaven, and till these be done, heaven is not prepared for us, nor we for it: he is gone to heaven, *ut prodromus,* as our forerunner, our harbinger, to take up and provide a place for us: and when that is done, he will come again and fetch us; he will not send for us, but come himself and fetch us. This is the great care that Jesus Christ the good Shepheard takes for his sheep.

6. Preparing glory for them.

But you will say, how shall a soul know that he comes under this care of Christ? that I may be able to say, I will cast off all my carking cares, for Christ cares for me, and I will rejoyce in the Lord for ever.

Quest. How shall a soul know whether he comes under this care of Christ?

Take these two things. Would you be sure Christ cares for you? then,

Answ.

1. Do you cast your care on him: that is the expression, *casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you,* 1 Pet. 5. 7. he never betraies his trust. Lean no more to your own understanding, rest no more on your own strength; friends may fail, your counsels may deceive you, your plots may be discovered, and the whole frame of your business dashed in pieces, and men at their wits ends: but remember to cast your care on Christ, he careth for you. *The foundations may be cast down, and the righteous not know what to do. Dwell in the land and feed on faith;* so one renders that place, *Psal.* 37. 3. Cast your care on him, and then put suppositions to death: *What if the fig tree shall not blossom, and there be no fruit in the vine, the labour of the Olive should cease, and the fields yeild no meat, if the flock be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd*

1. By his casting his care on Christ.

in the stall: yet I will cast my care upon the Lord. There is no way to ingage the care of Christ for you, like this of casting your care on him. And for such as are in publick place, roll your burden upon the Lord; there is a threefold burden that you are not able to stand under, but he will sustain you under them all.

1. You have a burden of affairs. *He will work all your works in you and for you.*

2. Your burden of opposition against you, cast that on the Lord, he will make your way plain and remove the mountains.

3. The burden of success, cast that on the Lord, and *he shall bring it to pass*: say you, the duty of the day is mine, the care of to morrow is Christs.

2. By his care of the things of Christ.

2. Consider what care have you of the things of Christ: it is the great complaint. *All seek their own, and none the things of Jesus Christ*, Phil. 2. 21. answerable to mens care of Christs affairs, will the comfort be of Christs care of your affairs. There are four things that Christ hath committed to your care; *his Name, his Spirit, his Scepter, his Seed*: Take you heed, that ye take care of all these, that his name be not dishonoured in you or by you; that his Spirit be not grieved; that his Scepter be not resisted; that his Seed be not persecuted.

This is the rule. How shall I know whether Christ loves me? what love is there stirred up towards Christ in thy heart? how shall I know whether Christ prayes for me? look what spirit of prayer he stirs up in thine heart. So, such care hath Christ of your affairs, as you have of his affairs. This care is the fruit of love; suitable to your love unto Christ, will be your care of the things of Christ. I shall shut up this with that of *Basil*, who having appeared much in the cause of his friend, to the great hazard of himself; some found fault with him for putting himself into so much danger: why? truly saith he, the love of my friend was the ground of it, *& ego non aliter amare didici*; and I never learned to love otherwise. Cast your care on Christ, and do not cast off your care of the things of Christ: and then let the difficulties be what they will, remember that in *Zach.* 6. 12. *Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts,*

Hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the Branch, he shall build the Temple of the Lord, your hands are straightned and your strength weak, and oppositions are strong; you see Mountains rise up in your way: look to the man, the Branch, he shall build the Temple of the Lord. Cast your care on the Lord Christ, he as a good Shepheard will take care of his sheep, and so we come to the fourth act, which Christ performs as a Shepheard to his flock.

IIII. Christ heals the diseases of the flock.

He heals the diseases of the flock. Look into *Ezek.* 34. 4. God complains and denounces a woe against the Shepheards, it concerns both Magistrates and Ministers; *the diseased ye have not strengthned, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken:* but in the sixteenth verse the Lord promiseth; *I will bind up that which was broken: I will strengthen that which was sick.* Who is he that must do it? see *ver.* 23. *I will set up one Shepheard over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant* David. *David* was dead long before *Ezekiel* lived, therefore it must be spoken of the Lord Jesus Christ the true Shepheard, who seeks that which is lost, and heals that which is sick. That is the sin which God threatens to punish the Idol shepheard for, *Zach.* 11. 16. *not visiting that which was cut off, nor healing the broken.* It is said by Historians, that the Pellican useth to cure any distemper of her young ones with her own blood. One of the Kings of *Portugal*, made it the property of a good Magistrate to heal the distempers of his people with his own blood, rather then to draw their blood to make himself whole.

There are two things that healing hath reference unto: to sickness and to wounds; sickness within, and wounds without. Jesus Christ heals the sickness of a soul, and the wounds of a State. There is the sickness of sin in the soul, and there are the wounds of judgement in a state. Jesus Christ heals both these.

1. He heals the sickness of the soul.

Jesus Christ as the Churches Shepheard, is the Physician that heals all the sicknesses of the flock: and here we shall speak to two heads.

1. What sicknesses he heals.
2. What potions he useth.

For the first, Sickness or a disease, as *Galen* describes it, *is an affection contrary to nature, whereby the acts of nature are hurt or hindred.* Now sin is every where in Scripture resembled to a disease; *they that be whole need not the Physitian, but they that are sick*, Matth. 9. 12. who is that? sinners, of them Christ speaks, such as are sensible of sin.

Sin is a sickness.

Sin is a sickness, and it is fitly called so in six respects.

1. It is from within. יצר

1. Sickness ariseth out of the body in which it is: so doth sin. It is the disease within, the treasure in the heart, the evil treasure: *out of which the evil man bringeth forth evil things.* And in *Gen.* 6. 5. every sin is called יצר *the creature of the heart*; it is called the sin of the soul: *Shall I give my first born for my transgression? the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul* ?Mic. 6. 7.

2. It is contrary to the spiritual nature.

2. Sickness is contrary to nature: so sin is contrary to that wherein God created man at first, to wit, holiness; and to the end for which he was made. Man was made for God and for himself, but sin carries him off from God. *These are they that separate themselves, sensual, not having the spirit*, Jude 19. Sin draws a man away, *he is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed*, Jam. 1. 14. it sets a man against himself, hence they are called *sinners against their own souls*, Num. 16. 38. and the Apostle tells you, *lusts fight against the soul*, 1 Pet. 2. 11.

3. It hinders the actions of the spiritual life.

3. As sickness hinders the actions of the natural body: so all the actions God requires of a man are hindered by sin; hence sinners are said to be *without strength*, Rom. 5. 6, 8. *wise to do evil, but to every good work reprobate.*

4. It produceth.

1. Pain.

2. Decay.

3. Deformity.

4. Corruption.

4. The common effects that are on the body by sickness; are also on the soul by sin: and we should find it so, if we could look into our souls. 1. Pain accompanies sickness: so there is a guilt follows sin, a dreadful accusation of conscience and expectation of wrath. 2. There is a languor, a decay, tabes goes with sickness; and so there doth with sin: *evil men and seducers wax worse and worse*, 2 Tim. 3. 13. 3. There goes a deformity with sickness: sickness mars the fairest face; so doth sin mar the beauty that is in the soul by holiness. 4. With sickness there goes a kind of loathsomness, a degree of corruption: so it is with sin, it is compared to *mire, to an open Sepulchre, a grave full of rottenness*: all these are on the

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ſoul by every ſin. But beſides, there are in ſin all ſorts of ſickneſſes; blindneſs of mind, the plague of the heart, a dart in the liver, the Lethargy in conſcience, a ſpirit of ſlumber, the Frenzy of paſſions, the Dropſie of covetouſneſs, the Feaver of luſt, the evil eye, the deaf ear, the invenomed ſtomack; all theſe are in ſin. Yea laſtly, there are all theſe in one ſin, for one ſin virtually contains all ſin. The glorious Angels, one ſin filled their nature with all that deviliſhneſs that is in them. If you ſhould ſee darkneſs ſeize on the body of the Sun, ſo as not only to ecclipſe the light of it from you, but to darken it in it ſelf; you would ſay, this were a moſt pernitious darkneſs. There was more brightneſs and beauty in your ſouls in your Creation, then is in the Sun in his ſtrength; one ſin darkned it all: ſin may well be called a ſickneſs. But when Jeſus Chriſt comes to cure the diſeaſes of the ſoul, whether they be ſtupifying or tormenting, when they be diſeaſes upon the vitals, or animals; whether as ſome, they be primary diſeaſes, or relapſes, and recidivations; Chriſt hath undertaken the cure of all.

But ſecondly, what is the Phyſick Chriſt gives? Jeſus Chriſt makes up the Phyſick he commonly gives you, of all or ſome of theſe ſix ingredients. Chriſt heals it.

1. His own blood; for *Jeſus Chriſt is all in all.* And as when I ſpake of feeding, I told you, he gave you his blood to drink: ſo his blood is not only for meat, but for medicine. His blood is the purgation that takes away the peccant humour: and his blood is the cordial that comforts drooping ſpirits; *by his ſtripes we are healed*, Eſa. 53. 5. 1. By his own blood.

Why, what is there in the blood of Chriſt to heal the diſeaſes of the ſoul? *Queſt.*

There is in ſin theſe two things. A debt to God, and a bondage to Satan. Now Chriſt brings that which anſwers both theſe. To God his blood is a ſatisfaction; as to ſin his blood is redemption: where ſin hath a dominion, Chriſts blood is redemption, he brings a ranſom and takes off the dominion of ſin; *the blood of Chriſt purgeth the conſcience*, Heb. 9. 14. and in *Revel.* 7. 14. *the robes of the Saints are waſhed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.* In the blood of Chriſt there is a power not only to ſatisfie God, but to redeem from ſin. That is one ingredient. *Anſw.*

2. We

2. By his Spirit.

2. We read *Mal.* 4. 2. *the Sun of righteousnes ariseth with healing under his wings.* Let us look what is the meaning of these wings, or else we cannot come to know how this healing comes. Interpreters conceive the beams of the Sun to be the wings whereby light and heat are conveyed. The light in the Sun remains there still: but it sends out its beams, and from thence there is *lumen in aere*, light in the Ayr. So the wings of the Sun of Righteousnes his beams are two, his Spirit and his Word; the Spirit and Gospel of Christ, are the beams by which light comes from him, and so healing also.

3. By the word.

First, the Spirit is called, *the oyl of gladnes*, Psal. 45. 8. in oyl there is an healing, as well as a suppling vertue; the Spirit is *collyrium, eye-salve*, Revel. 3. 19. healing comes in by the Spirit, and it comes in by the Word too: that hath a healing power; *the waters issuing out of the Sanctuary, go forth into the Sea, and the waters of the Sea are healed*, Ezek. 47. 8. by waters in Scripture, are meant people, and by Sea, multitudes. Where the waters of the Gospel come, multitudes are healed; but in *ver.* 11. *but the miery and marish places shall not be healed, they shall be given to salt.* Where these waters stand and turn into mud, those places are never healed by them, but they are given to perpetual barrenness. But here is healing goes with the Gospel, and Gospel-Ordinances. The Spirit, that is the second, and the Word is the third ingredient.

4. By the examples of the Saints

4. The example of the Saints, that is another ingredient for healing, in *Ezek.* 47. 12. the people of God that lived near the waters of the Sanctuary, are compared to trees planted there, and their fruit to be for meat, and their leaves for medicine. *And by the river upon the bank thereof on this side and on that side shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, nor the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to its moneths, because their waters they issued out of the Sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.* There is something in the Saints of a healing nature. *The lips of the righteous feed many*, saith *Solomon.* As there is in them a feeding, so there is an healing vertue. *The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife by the husband*, 1 Cor. 7. 14. The Apo-

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stle speaks *of a chast conversation coupled with fear, whereby men were won*, 1 Pet. 3. 2. there is a healing power in the holy conversation of the godly.

5. By afflictions.

5. Afflictions, the Lord makes them medicinable. *Isa.* 27. 9. *This is all the fruit, the taking away of their sin*: he smote them, the wind of his displeasure went forth against them, but in measure. And what was the fruit? *by this shall the iniquity of* Jacob *be purged, and this is all the fruit, the taking away his sin.* There is abundance of folly in the heart of Gods children, the Lord makes use of the rod of correction to fetch it out.

6. With the sins

Lastly, Sometimes he heals sin with sin, as Physicians temper poison into a wholsome medicine. This is a skill proper to this Soveraign Physician, to bring *light out of darkness*, blessing out of the curse, heaven out of hell, life out of death. Sometimes God may make the sin of others to be a medicine unto me: thus the fall of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* set before the Saints, *Paul* makes a medicine of it, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. *Nevertheless, the foundation of God stands sure, and hath this seal, the Lord knoweth who are his, and let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.* Look you every one to your own hearts, and wayes. Look upon the Apostacy of *Solomon.* God sanctifies the falls of other Saints as healing medicines, that when you see such Cedars fall, you should look to your standing. Christ makes a medicine sometimes of the sins of others, but often of our own. Thus he makes use of *Peters* fall to *Peter* himself, therefore in *John* 21. 15. after Christ was risen from the dead, he asks *Peter* the Question; Simon *son of* Jonas, *lovest thou me more then these?* Christ points him to the sin, his self-confidence, when he said, *though all men should deny thee, yet would not I*, and points him to his fall: and *Peter* answers, *Lord thou knowest that I love thee.* Some Criticks observe, that Christ asks *Peter*, Σίμων Ἰωνᾶ, ἀγαπᾷς με; and that the word ἀγαπᾷς notes an higher degree of love then φιλῶ, but *Peter* answers by the less, Ναὶ Κύριε σὺ οἶδας ὅτι φιλῶ σε, that which notes truth, but no comparison. Thus the Lord makes a medicine out of sin, and none could do it but such a Physitian.

1. Of others.

2. Our own.

Now for his healing our relapses, which we have most need

to fear, because it argues the strength of a disease, and that nature is spent. But of that I purpose a tract, to let you see the causes, nature, symptoms and cures of backsliding; for the present, I shall refer you to *Jer.* 3. 22. *Return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings*, and to *Hos.* 14. 4. *I will heal their backslidings.* Thus the Lord heals sin as a dis-

2. Christ heals the wounds of a State.

ease. See now how Christ heals judgement as a wound in a State. Jesus Christ is a Chirurgeon, as well as a Physitian, he heals the wounds of a State, as well as the sicknesses of a soul. That judgements on a State are frequently compared in Scripture to wounds, and do need healing, is evident, *Esay* 1. 5, 6. *The whole head is sick, the whole heart is heavy, from the crown of the head, unto the sole of the foot, there is no sound part within them, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores.* I conceive it is not spoken of sin: the text will not bear it, but of the judgements wherewith they were smitten. So *Mic.* 1. 9. *her wound is incurable.* And that great affliction which came on the Roman Empire is called, *the deadly wound*, Rev. 13. 3. yet these wounds Christ hath undertaken to cure. And to heighten the cure, consider, six things make a wound dangerous, if not incurable, As,

What makes such wounds dangerous.

1. When the wound is deep. Now mark, when *judgement reacheth the neck*, Isa. 8. 8. when a man is in water up to the neck, he is near drowning. So his breath as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, *Isa.* 30. 28. *the sword reacheth unto the heart*; Jer. 4. 18. *the whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint*, the judgement hath seized upon the vitals, then is the wound dangerous.

1. When they are deep.

2. When the wounds are many as well as deep, that increaseth the danger; if there were but one deep wound there were hope of cure, but when *totum pro corpore vulnus*, the body is full of wounds, then the cure is hard. When the judgement is upon Princes, Councils, Armies, Ministers, and whatsoever is dear unto us, when judgement seizeth on all, that is an argument of great danger.

2. When they are many.

3. When they are festered.

3. When the wounds are festered, then they are dangerous. The new Idolatry of *Baal* was easily cast out, but the old Idolatry of the Calves was not so easily removed. New superstitions were cast down, but the high places escape. When judge-

judgements are as an hereditary disease, propagated from the parents, when it is woven into the bowels of a State, when wrath is woven into the policy of a Kingdom, the cure is very difficult.

4. When the wound is inflamed, when a people are impatient, full of rage. In *Josiahs* time, when he cast out Idolatry, there were *the remnants of* Baal in the hearts of the people still, and men were enraged against all the wayes of cure, therefore the Lord threatneth them; *I will stretch out my hand upon* Judah, *and upon all the inhabitants of* Jerusalem, *and I will cut off the remnant of* Baal *from this place, and the name of the Chemarims with the Priests: and them that worship the host of heaven upon the house-tops, and them that worship, and that swear by the Lord, and that swear by* Malchom, *Zeph.* 1.4, 5. they opposed all the means of being reclaimed, *untill the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy,* 2 Chron. 36. 16. 4. When they are inflamed.

5. When all means have been used, variety of means, and the wound is not healed by them, that shews it to be dangerous. When men have tryed their own wayes, and that will not do. *When* Ephraim *saw his sickness, and* Judah *his wound*; *then went* Ephraim *to the* Assyrian *and sent to King* Jareb: *but he could not heal them, nor cure them of their wound*, Hos. 5. 13. that hath not done it. When Magistrates and Ministers, who are called healers, can do no good. *When the bellows are burnt, the lead consumed in the fire: and the founder melteth in vain,* Jer. 6. 29. when God shall put in to the medicine and plaister, the prayers, and tears, and blood of many; Fast-dayes, and dayes of thanksgiving, and no cure; this argues the wound is dangerous. 5. When after variety of means used it is not cured.

6. When after all means used the wound grows worse and worse, as it was with *Israel*; *When I would have healed* Israel, *then the iniquity of* Ephraim *was discovered, and the wickedness of* Samaria, *Hos.* 7. 1. when there are new and unsuspected wayes of sinning, new and unimagined judgements break in that men did never fear. Nay when a bile begins to rise again in the old sore, this is a sad sign. Look into *Lev.* 13. 18, 19. see how leprosie is discovered. *The flesh in which, even in the skin thereof, was a bile and is healed, and in the place* 6. When after all means used they grow worse.

of the bile there be a white rising, or a bright spot white and somewhat reddish, and if when the Priest seeth it, behold it be in sight lower then the skin, and the hair of it be white, the Priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is the plague of leprosie broken out of the bile. All these make the wound dangerous: so that had not the Lord Jesus Christ undertaken it, and stiled himself, *The Lord that healeth you,* we must have sate down, and said our wound is incurable. Look upon all these and apply them to our present state, and see whether this be not *Englands* wound. But now, *Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no Physitian there? why then is not the wound of the daughter of my people healed?* surely there is a balm and a Physitian: the Lord Jesus Christ hath undertaken it; he saith, *Return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings,* Jer. 3. 22. But how doth Christ heal States of their wounds? we have seen what the wound is, and how dangerous, and that none can cure it but he.

Quest. Now how doth he do it?

Answ. Here I shall propound six wayes, by which the Lord useth to cure wounded Kingdoms: and let us see whether he takes any of these wayes with us, else we may say, we are far from cure.

How Christ heals wounded Kingdoms.

These I shall take from the most wounded people in the world, the Jews in their present condition; *whose backs are bowed down, and upon whom wrath is come to the utmost.*

1. He brings them to utter despair in themselves.

1. Christ when he comes to cure a Kingdom, he will bring it to an utter despair in it self of all healing. So *Ezek.* 37. 11. the Lord comes to cure them, to make the dead bones to live, but when he comes, what is their condition? *Behold they say, our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we are cut off for our part.* When the people say thus once; *then, no saith God, my people, I will open your graves*: it will never be till then; they shall say, *this is* Sion *whom no man looketh after*: when they look on themselves, as we use to do on a dying man; Physitians have given him over, friends stand by weeping, the Curtains are drawn, and all are silent. As the Lord sayes to *Edom*; *All the men of thy confederacies have brought thee even to the border: the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, they have laid a wound under thee.* Obadiah ver. 7. he speaks

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it of carnal confederacies; mens thinking to heal a dying State by them. No, saith God, they have laid a wound under thee. *Drasius* renders it *apostema, ulcus latens*, an inward impostthume, a secret wound; the more men delight themselves in this or that means, the more the wound ripens. No, you must be brought to say, Ashur *shall not save us*: else when you think to lye down in safety, your confederates will lay a wound under you. The carnal confidences, of which this people are full, is a great argument our healing is not near. מזר

2. When the Lord will heal that his antient people of their wound, he applyes a plaister of Repentance. *I will pour upon the house of* David *and upon the inhabitants of* Jerusalem *a Spirit of grace and supplication: and they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him as a man mourneth for his only son, and be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born*, Zach. 12. 10. It is spoken of the same people, and the same time of healing: and the means is Repentance. There is this disease in Christian States, it is their policy that sets rules to Religion: their policy bounds their piety. Till God bring a Nation to the sight of this sin and give them Repentance for it, there is little hope of healing. As *Henry* the fourth of *France* said to *Beza*, touching the reformed Religion, that he would lanch no further into that Sea, then that he might know how to come back to a safe harbour. When God intends to heal a people, he will give them repentance for all these wayes. But is it so with us? there is one Scripture that looks very dreadfully upon us, *Revel.* 16. 9. *When the fourth Angel pours out his vial upon the Sun* (which some conceive God is doing at this time) one would think when this vial were poured out, great repentance would follow. *No*, the text sayes, *men were scorched with great heat*, full of pains, and rage because of their pains, *and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and sores, and repented not of their deeds.* Is it not our case? there may be raging between party and party: but there is little Repentance. When God intends to heal a Nation, he applyes a plaister of Repentance. 2. He brings them to Repentance.

3. God will heal that Nation, by a thorough reformation. See *Zach.* 13. throughout the whole Chapter. When God heals 3. He works a thorough reformation.

heals the wound of the daughter of his people, what a thorough reformation doth he make: *in that day there shall be a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, the names of the Idols shall be cut off, and they shall be no more remembred, the false Prophet and the unclean spirit shall pass out of the land,* false teachers shall be punished, deceivers shall be ashamed; all of them shall be *refined as silver, and tryed as gold.* Men may be drawn to reform so far as shall serve a politick end: *Jehu* durst do so. But cast your eye upon that thirteenth of the *Revelations*, see the Popish policy there; the Roman Empire receives a deadly wound, and they go about to heal it: but how? by making an Image of the Beast, and putting life into it, and so Antichrist ariseth: the form is changed, but it is the Image of the Beast still. If States go about to heal a deadly wound by making an Image of the same Beast, it is but an Antichristian way of reforming. This world hath a σχῆμα, a fashion, and if the fashion be but changed, it will be an evil world still.

4. He makes Magistrates healers.

4. When the Lord will heal his people, he causeth Magistrates to become healers. He takes away the spirit of cruelty from Magistrates, *Ezek.* 45.8, 9. it is spoken of the same time of healing, *My Princes shall no more oppress my people, but shall take away their exactions, and execute justice and judgement.* When God intends to heal a people, thus he doth. Magistrates shall not be as *Chrysostom* saith of *Herod*, an executioner of the sick, but no healer. These things shall not be.

5. He takes away the spirit of bitterness.

5. When God comes to heal his people, he takes away the spirit of bitterness that is in one against another, and how will he do it? *I will give them one heart and one way.*

That bitter zeal that is among men the Lord will remove: there is many a man in these dayes that is like those Creatures, that the more they sting the less they hurt, whose fury is such, that he doth *veritatem defendendo percutere.* The Lord will give men such a spirit as *Calvins* was, who when he was told, how *Luther* did speak bitterly and reproachfully of him, replyed; let *Luther* call me dog and Devil, yet I will think of him as an instrument of Jesus Christ. God will cause lesser controversies to cease among his people.

6. He powers out a spirit of prayer.

6. God heals his people by the prayers of his servants, *he pours*

powrs out a Spirit of grace and supplication, Zach. 12. 10. And he tells us of a tongue wherein is healing; *An wholsome tongue, or a healing tongue is as a tree of life*, Prov. 15.4. When the Lord intended to bring his people out of *Babylon*, he stirred up *Daniels* spirit to pray; and so he will do, when he purposeth to heal the wounds of a people. Now look over all these, and see what signs there be of healing to *England*. I fear we may see in them sad presages, that our wound is yet dangerous, and I should say incurable, were it not that the Lord Jesus Christ hath stiled himself an healer. And so much for this fourth Office of Christ as a Shepheard, he heals his flock.

V. Christ defends the flock.

5. Christ as a Shepheard doth defend the flock. *Jacob* speaks of his care in defending *Labans* flock, *Thus I was, in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from mine eyes*, Gen. 31. 40. And those shepheards, *Luk.* 2. 8. they kept watch over their flocks by night to defend them from thieves and wolves. And *David* hazarded himself when he kept his Fathers sheep; when there came a Lion and a Bear and took a Lamb out of the flock, he went out after him and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth, 1 *Sam.* 17. 34, 35. This is that the Lord layes to the charge of the Shepheards, *Ezek.* 34.2,3. Shepheards there were; for he denounceth a wo against them, because they did kill those that were fed, and suffered the sheep to be meat to all the beasts of the field, *ver.* 5. and therefore he promiseth in *ver.* 25. *I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land, and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.* So *John* 10.12. *The hireling seeth the wolfe coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth, and the wolfe cometh and scattereth the sheep.* The good shepheard doth not so, he ingageth himself in defence of the flock. And for the better understanding of this, how the Lord Jesus as a Shepheard doth defend his flock, let us enquire.

1. What are the enemies to the flock, and that Christ hath undertaken to defend his flock against them.

2. What are the intents of these enemies?

3. How Christ as a Shepheard doth preserve and defend the flock. What he doth in their defence.

For

For the first, what be the enemies of the flock. Truly as there is no creature more lyable to danger then a sheep, so there is none less able to do any thing in its own defence. A sheep is *ingenio simplex*, of the least power and the least policy. The Scripture reckons up five enemies of the flock of Christ.

Enemies of the flock.

1. The Arch-enemy is *the wolfe. Satan he is called Abaddon and Apollyon, the destroyer*, Rev. 9. 11. He was first an enemy to Jesus Christ, *the seed of the woman*; and ever since he hath been so to all Christs seed. *He moved God against* Job *without cause*, Job 2. 3. His enmity is boundless and endless. *The Lord will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able.* If God would give way to it, Satan would tempt you above what you are able. *In that day the Lord with his sore, and great and strong sword shall punish Leviathan that piercing serpent, even Leviathan that crooked serpent*, Isa. 27. 1. What is that Leviathan? Interpreters conceive by it is meant *totum regnum diabolicum*, Satan and all the powers of darkness. And why is he called Leviathan? the word is derived from לוה which signifieth to add an increase. The Devil is alway adding to torment and vex the people of God. This is such an enemy to the sheep, that his enmity reacheth to their eternal estates, *spiritual wickednesses in heavenly things*, Eph. 6. 12. He is an enemy to us in our spiritual priviledges, things that concern our eternal life. And all the enmity that is in wicked men is begun in Satan, they are but his Instruments. *The Devil shall cast some of you into prison*, Rev. 2. 10. not the Devil immediately, but the Devil in his Instruments. That place is very considerable in *Jam.* 3. 15. *This wisdom* (he had spoken before of their bitter envyings and strife in their hearts, and he saith this wisdom) *is not from above, but is earthly, sensual and devillish*, δαιμονιώδης. Those kind of adjectives, as Grammarians observe, *copiam & plenitudinem significant*. But the Lord Christ engageth himself against this enemy, so is the promise, *he shall bruise thine head*, Gen. 3. 15. *And he shall smite in pieces the head over many Countries*, Psal. 110. 6. This head is all the power of darkness, and it shall be smitten in pieces by the great Shepheard.

1. Satan.

2. Another sort of enemies are Lyons and Wolves; open Persecutors.

2. Open persecutors.

Persecutors. You have them represented under the name of *the great red Dragon*, Rev. 12. and though in the thirteenth Chapter, the beast that cometh up out of the earth hath *two horns like a Lamb*, and makes a shew as if he were one of the flock, yet *he spake as a Dragon*, ver. 11. he was one of the same kind. Now all these enemies the Lord tells you, *they shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth*, Mic. 7. 17. When the great battle of *Armageddon* shall be fought, *Rev.* 16. 14, and 16. verses, there shall be an end of all persecution against the Church: that I take to be the meaning of that place, *Rev.* 21. 3. *There shall be no more sorrow, nor crying.*

3. False teachers.

3. There are Foxes that are enemies to the flock too: or *Wolves in sheeps clothing*. So the Apostle calls them. *I know that after my departure, shall grievous Wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock*, Acts 20. 29. whence shall they arise? *from among your selves*. Wolves out of the sheeps fold, that shall endeavour to destroy the flock by wiles. Thus Antichrist gives *the wine of her fornication in a golden cup*. It is a part of *Romes* Merchandize, *Rev.* 18. 13. *the souls of men*. It is *Beza's* Comment upon that place, *Cant.* 2. 15. *Take us the foxes, the little foxes that destroy the vines*; that in the beginning these persons alwayes use the craft of the fox, but afterward *exutâ vulpinâ pelle, induunt lupinam*, they lay aside the foxes skin, and put on the wolfes. As it was said of *Boniface* the eighth, *intravit ut vulpes, regnavit ut Leo, moritur ut canis*, he came in like a Fox, raigned like a Lyon, and dyed like a Dog. Look for it, it was *Augustines* prediction; there are three sorts of persecutions that shall be in the Church; the first, violent by heathens: the second, with much fraud by Antichrist in his rise: and the third, by those who shall joyn with Antichrist in his fall, who shall joyn violence and fraud together. Yet Christ the good Shepheard hath undertaken to protect his flock against them all: if a flood be cast out to carry away the woman, *the earth shall help the woman, and the earth shall open her mouth and swallow up the flood*, Rev. 12. 15, 16. and *the Lord shall cause the false Prophet and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land*, Zach. 13. 2, 3.

4. Great men.

4. Another sort of enemies of the flock, are *the fat cattle*.

You have that expression in *Ezek.* 34. 20, 21. *Thus saith the Lord, I will judge between the fat cattle, and between the lean cattle: because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad.* The fat cattle, that is, the great men of the Nation, they who have more parts, greater place, higher authority then others, that use their parts to the utmost to suppress those who are under them, that are not content to eat of the fat, and to drink of the clean water: but they foul the rest with their feet. Thus if a man have higher parts then others, he undervalues all besides himself. As the Grecians did on all other Nations, they are all Barbarians to him. If he conceive he hath a higher light then another: if men subscribe not to it, their persons are scorned, their names defamed. The Lord saith, this is for the fat cattle to push the lean; and Christ hath undertaken the defence of his flock against these. *O ye my flock, behold I will judge between the small cattle of lambs and kids, and the rams and he-goats,* ver. 17. *I will judge between the fat cattle and the lean cattle,* ver. 20. *and I will save my flock, and they shall be no more a prey, and I will judge between cattle and cattle,* ver. 22.

6. Self seeking shepheards.

Lastly, There be not only the fat cattle in the same flock, but the Shepheards of the same flock, and shall these turn enemies to the flock? yes, in the second verse of that same Chapter you read, *Wo to the Shepheards of* Israel *that do feed themselves.* Interpreters expound it of Magistrates and Ministers. Magistrates are enemies to the flock, when they make use of their authority only to advance themselves; *every man for his gain from his quarter*: and so Ministers when they take upon them to *be Lords over Gods heritage, to Lord it over their faith.* It was *Bernards* complaint, *paucos habemus pastores, excommunicatores multos,* many took to themselves the power and authority, few took pains and laboured in the duty. Now look into the tenth verse, the Lord saith, *Behold I am against the shepheards, and will require my flock from their hand: and will deliver my flock from their mouth.* These are the enemies of the Church, not only those that keep the wall may take away the Churches vail from her, but those watchmen that go about the City may smite and wound her, *Cant.* 5. 7. But against

againſt all theſe enemies Jeſus Chriſt hath undertaken to defend his flock.

2. But now what is the deſign of theſe enemies? The deſign of the enemies:

Our Saviour who beſt underſtands it, tells us, *the wolfe catcheth and ſcattereth the ſheep*, John 10. 12. the deſign is to catch ſome and ſcatter others. Some they ſnatch by violence; 1. To catch ſome. the great end of all the enemies of the Church, is the eternal deſtruction of the ſheep, to devour their ſouls. Not that this is the direct aym of all theſe enemies: but this is Satans aym, for as God acts men beyond what they intend, ſo doth Satan. God ſent *Nebuchadnezzar*, Iſa. 10. 6. *I will ſend him againſt an hypocritical Nation, and againſt the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the ſpoyl, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire in the ſtreets. Howbeit he meaneth not ſo, neither doth his heart think ſo: but it is in his heart to deſtroy and cut off Nations not a few.* So *Cyrus* went forth to enlarge his dominions: little did he know the work God had appointed him to, *Iſa.* 44. 28. *Alexander* went forth againſt the King of *Perſia*, Dan. 10. 20. little did he think he was to go forth for the Churches good. Little did *Joſephs* brethren know when they ſold *Joſeph* into *Egypt*, that God had ſent him before to ſave much people alive. God acts beyond mens ayms; and ſo doth the devil. They ſet up *an Image of jealouſie*, Ezek. 8. 3. ſome think it was the Altar brought from *Damaſcus*: but what was the end? *that I ſhould go far from my ſanctuary*, ver. 6. that was the Devils end. So the falſe Prophets, *Ezek.* 13. 18. the Lord ſaith, *they did hunt the ſouls of his people, and ſlay the ſouls that ſhould not dye*; they had no ſuch aym; but it was the Devils aym. That is the firſt, they do it to catch the ſheep. But if Satan cannot catch them, 2. yet he deſires to ſcatter them. And this is done ſometimes To ſcatter others 1. by perſecution, as that which was raiſed about *Stephen*, By perſecution. *whereby they were all ſcattered abroad*, Acts 8. 1. But there is another way of ſcattering, a voluntary diſperſion. *When men* 2. *leave the aſſemblies of the Saints, as the manner of ſome is*, Heb. By diviſion. 10. 25. through diverſity of opinions, or difference in judgements, for ſo long as there be different degrees of light and different apprehenſions, and ſome things in Scripture hard to be underſtood (and ſo long as there is an enemy to improve

all these, there will be difference in opinions) by this means Satan endeavours to scatter the flock. These be the ayms of the enemy. Now Christ hath undertaken the defence of the flock against both these.

3. Christ undertakes to preserve his flock.

1. That the enemy shall not catch nor devour them. He hath undertaken, that Satan shall not devour them, and that persecutors shall not destroy them.

1. That Satan shall not devour them.

1. Christ will defend the sheep, that Satan shall not devour them: and that he doth five glorious wayes.

1. By taking possession of them himself.

1. Jesus Christ doth preserve the flock from Satans devouring them, by taking possession of them himself. *He comes upon the strong man and overcometh him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusteth, and divideth his spoils*, Luk. 11. 22 That is, all Satans temptations which he used before and was confident of. *He spoiled Principalities and powers*, Col. 2. 25. he unclothed, disrobed them. So that where the Devil came with a great deal of pomp: Christ takes all away, and makes him naked. He came for this end, *that he might deliver them, who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage*, Heb. 2. 13. he takes away the energetical power of Satans temptations; which Satan never presented but they took. Now they become ineffectual.

2. By discovering Satans wiles.

2. He doth it by pouring out a spirit of illumination, discovering unto them the depths of Satan. Satan hath *his devices*, his *methods*, *we are not ignorant of them*, saith the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. so that let him come in what shape he will, a man can see the Devil in the temptation. Let him get into a Disciple, a man shall be able to say, *Get thee behind me Satan.* The Devil is not alway a Lyon, but sometimes a Serpent in his temptations, but the Lord gives his people a spirit of Revelation to discern him.

3. By teaching his how to act faith.

3. He doth it by teaching his people how to weild the sheild of faith, *Ephes.* 6. 16. *above all take the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.* Jesus Christ knows there is fuel in you, though there were none in him, and the darts of Satan are fiery darts. Now the shield of faith will quench them. How? Faith leads a man to the Word, the fountain of truth; and to Christ the fountain of strength and grace. He it is that quencheth the lust within, and then it dyes without. 4. He

4. He doth it by setting before a man the odiousnes of being acted by the Devil. It is no small trouble to a gracious soul to be hurried by the power of a temptation, and this makes him *keep himself that the wicked one touch him not*, 1 Joh. 5. 18. so that he doth not touch him as the Loadstone doth the needle, to leave upon the soul an impression of the same devillish nature: that he touch him not *tactu qualitativo*.

4. By representing the odiousnes of being acted by Satan.

5. When the Devil comes with violence and importunity, the strength of a temptation lyes in nothing so much, as in the intention of thoughts, and the renewing of them: as *Dalilah* lay at *Sampson* day by day; as *Luther* was tempted to self-murder, and the temptation was so violent, that he was fain to lye down three hours together, and repeat over the sixth Commandment. Then the Lord Christ comes in as he did to *Joshua, the Lord rebuke thee O Satan*, Zach. 3. 2. So in the case of *Peter, Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to winnow thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not*. Christ comes in to the rescue. Thus he preserves his sheep that Satan devour them not.

5. By rebuking violent temptations.

2. Christ preserves his sheep in respect of persecutors, that they shall not destroy them.

2. That persecutors shall not destroy them by persecution.

1. When a persecution ariseth, sometimes he hides them. So saith the *Psalmist, in the time of trouble, he shall hide me in his pavilion, in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me*, Psal. 27. 5. Sometimes he causeth the heart of the enemy to melt towards them; *on all the glory he creates a defence*. God gave *Jeremy* favor in the eyes of *Nebuchadrezzar* King of *Babylon*, so that he gave a charge to *Nebuzaradan* the Captain of his guard concerning him, *Jer.* 39. 10. *Esau* comes with a bloody intention against *Jacob*: but God so awed *Esau*'s spirit, that *Jacob* saw his face as an Angel of God, but usually, *when the enemy comes in as a flood, the spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him*, Isa. 59 19. The meaning is, when all the power of man fails, then the Spirit of God comes in, not by an immediate work, but by raising up the spirits of men. *Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord*, Zach. 4. 6. he will raise up such as shall be able to defend them. *I will bend* Judah *for him, and fill the bow with* Ephraim, *and*

1. By hiding them.

2. Melting the heart of the enemy.

raise up thy sons, O Sion, *against thy sons, O* Greece, *and make thee as the sword of a mighty man,* Zach. 9. 13. God will put strength and courage into some happy instruments that shall be imployed for his Churches good.

2. That they shall not scatter them by division.

2. Again, the Lord doth not only preserve the flock that the wolfe catch them not, but that he scatter them not. There is a twofold scattering or disperſion, one by diverſity in opinion, the other by difference in affections; the Lord hath undertaken to preserve his flock from being scattered by either of these. Not that none of the sheep shall be scattered: but that the flock shall not be scattered. And this he doth,

1. Through difference in judgment.

1. By keeping their spirits low and humble: the ground of all novel opinions is mans being *vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,* Col. 2. 18. *Augustin* found out the pedegree of all hereſie, *Superbia mater hæreſios.* This pride the Lord cures.

1. By keeping their spirits humble.

2. By giving to them chaste judgements that they do not run a whoring after novelties; there is a whorishneſs in judgement as well as in affection, *so all the Kings of the earth ran a whoring after the beast, and were drunk with the wine of her fornications.*

2. Keeping their judgements chaste.

3. By ballasting their hearts and affections with the love of the truth, 2 *Thes.* 2. 10, 11. *Because they received not the love of the truth; God gave them up to strong deluſions, that they should believe a lye, that lye of Popery.*

3. Ballasting them with the love of truth.

4. By enabling them to keep a good conſcience; faith is the lading, but a good conſcience is the ship. When men make shipwrack of a good conſcience, no wonder if they erre from the faith, 2 *Tim.* 2. 18. Unclean judgements easily flow from unclean practices.

4. By keeping a good conſcience.

5. By keeping in their spirits a holy neglect of strange opinions. That place is marvellous conſiderable, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. *The spirit speaketh expreſly, that in the latter dayes some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of Devils.* The great snare lay not in this, that there were such doctrines, but that men gave heed unto them. The main strength of temptation lyes in intention of thoughts. If a mans thoughts be set upon a sin, either in opinion or practice, it is a thousand to one but that man is catched. As *Ammon* waxed lean from day to day, when his heart was set upon

upon *Tamar*. There be lusts of the mind, as well as of the flesh. Jesus Christ preserves his from being scattered by diversity of opinions.

2. He preserves them from being scattered by difference in affections. It is more to be wished then to be hoped, that while there is difference of light, we should be all of one mind: yet we should all mind the same thing. Now the wayes by which Christ preserves men from being thus scattered, are these six or seven. 2. Through difference in affection.

1. By keeping their hearts close to the pattern of wholesome words, to the Analogy of faith, and the fundamentals of Religion. *Let us propheſie according to the Analogy of faith*, saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 12. 6. And *hold fast the form of sound words*, 2 Tim. 1. 13. and they that do so, their affections will not be so alienated about circumstantial things; the reason of mens difference in affection, is because in those circumstantials the main of their Religion lyes. 1. By keeping them close to the word.

2. By causing them to go by joynt consent in practice of the truths wherein they agree: that is the rule, *Phil.* 3. 16. *wherein we have already attained*; *let us walk by the same rule.* It is the great evil of this people, because we disagree in some things, we can agree in nothing: whereas if we did but conscientiously practice those things wherein we do agree, men could hardly observe wherein we differ. 2. By joynt consent in practice.

3. By teaching them to be wise to sobriety, and not to be boysterous in defence of truth: violence and passion never honour the truths of God. The Apostle exhorts us *to speak the truth in love*, Eph. 4. 15. And he that is a wise man endued with knowledge, should *out of a good conversation shew forth his works with meekness of wisdom*, Jam. 3. 13. and if truth were managed thus, you would find you might better break a flint on a pillow then on a stone. 3. By sobriety in wisdom.

4. By teaching them to silence all curious and nice questions, that rather tend to division, then to godliness and edification. Thus the Apostle, when they were contending about meats and drinks, takes them off thus, *The Kingdom of God consists not in meat and drink: but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the holy Ghost*, Rom. 14. 17. It is true *fragmenta veritatis sunt pretiosa*, the very filings of truth are pre- 4. Silencing nice questions.

tious;

tious; but let every truth have its place and season. Let not circumstantial truths, thrust out fundamental.

5. By beholding each others graces.

5 By turning the eyes of men of different affections upon the graces one of another: that they should not look so much at what is wanting in them, as to how much of the Image of God is stamped upon them: and if we can say, I cannot deny but they bear the same Image; I hope to meet them at the right hand of Christ hereafter, how then can it be, but we should love them now.

6. By praying one for another.

6. By pouring out upon them a spirit of prayer one for another. This is the great way the Devil takes to alienate men, first by difference in opinion, and so works difference in affection, and then they cast them out of their prayers: and we should take this course to heal this evil: the more thou differest from him in opinion, by so much the more do thou pray for him: let him but be the friend of thy prayer, and be alienated in affection from him if thou canst.

7. By representing the sad effects of such alienation.

Lastly, Christ sets before his people the dreadful effects this alienation of affections hath wrought. 'Bullinger observes 'that one cause of every one of the persecutions was, when 'they had peace, they were at difference among themselves, 'and then God gave them up to enemies again, *ad abstergendam rubiginem*, to scower off their rust. It is the opinion of 'some, that there is a cloud hangs over us still, and that our 'present divisions may lay a foundation of the greatest persecution, if they be not suddenly healed. When that glorious Instrument of Christ Mr. *Calvin*, had wrought that great work of reformation in *Geneva*, and refusing to admit *Barclaus* and others that denied the Godhead of Christ; it wrought such a division among the Protestants there, that they were like to have thrust him out of the Town. Take the instance of some of our own, who fled in Queen *Maries* dayes into other places for refuge: when the storm was a little over, they began to persecute one another. Thus Gods giving men up in judgement, sometimes to the power of the Devil and the dangerous consequents following upon it, the consideration thereof may be a means to prevent us from this scattering by difference in affections.

VI. Christ guides his flock.

We come now to the sixth and last particular, that Jesus Christ

Christ as a Shepheard undertakes the guidance of the flock. Thus *John* 10. 3, 4. *He calleth his sheep by name, and leadeth them out: he goeth before the sheep, and the sheep follow him.* There be none that are Christs sheep, but were given to him by compact between God the Father and Christ, before the world was: and together with that compact and Covenant, began *the Lambs book of life.* For all that were given unto Christ by Covenant, he set down their names there, so as he knows them all, and hath undertaken the guidance of them in the way of grace, till he bring them unto glory.

But how doth he do this? he goeth before them. We find in the Old Testament a double expression of the manner of shepheards in reference to their sheep. Sometimes they are said to *lead them*: and sometimes they *drive them*, Gen. 32. 16. *Jacob* delivers the present of sheep and cattle, that he intended for *Esau*, into the hand of his servants, *every drove by themselves*: but you have another expression; *Psal.* 80. 1. *Give ear O Shepheard of* Israel, *thou that leadest* Joseph *like a flock.* Now this being more suitable to the Spirit of Christ, that is a free Spirit, it is so expressed. *He goeth before them.* Hence it is, that Christ hath several names given him in Scripture. In *Isa.* 55. 4. he is called נגיד *the leader of my people.* The same word is used concerning him, *Dan.* 9. 25. *Messiah the leader.* There be in the Scripture three glorious names given unto Christ upon this account. In *Acts* 3. 15. he is called ἀρχηγὸν, *the chief leader.* And the same word is used, *Heb.* 2. 10. Now that you may know how he is a leader, he is not only ὁδηγὸς, *dux viæ* (that word is used, *John* 16. 14. *The leader of the way*) but he is στρατηγὸς, *dux militiæ*, a Leader in the Army, *a Captain of the Lords host*, Josh. 5. 15. so that if you go in the way, he is *dux viæ*; if in a warfare, he is *dux militiæ*, he is the General, and the word of Command is his: he hath thus led the flock in all ages: he undertook the conduct of *Abraham*, *who raised up the righteous man from the East, and called him to his foot? I the Lord*, Isa. 41. 2, 4. who is called *the first and the last*, but Jesus Christ? *Rev.* 1. 17. he called *Abraham* to his foot. What is that? by foot is meant footsteps: when one leads, and the other follows: as it is said, Barak *went up with ten thousand men at his feet*, Judg.

4. 10. so Christ went before, and *Abraham* followed at his foot. Thus he led the Israelites in the wilderness where there was no way: the Lord saith, *behold I send an Angel before thee*, it was Jesus Christ; for he saith, *my name is in him*, Exod. 23. 20, 21. he is called, *The Angel of Gods presence*, Isa. 63. 9. Christ is the leader of the flock; and as he was so under the Old Testament, so he is still to this day. All the armies against Antichrist, who is the leader of them? *they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*, Rev. 14. 4.

Now let us enquire into the meaning of this great truth, by speaking something to these six heads.

1. That in all the wayes of Gods people, there is a way of God to be found out, and taken heed unto.

2. It is the skill of a Christian to find out that way.

3. When it is found out, it is hard to keep.

4. Christ as a guide hath undertaken to discover to us the way, and to keep us in it.

5. What a blessed thing it is to be under such a Leader.

6. And lastly, we shall conclude all with arguments to follow the guidance of Christ.

A double way of man.

To begin with the first. There is a double way of man, the way of his heart, and the way of his life; the way of his

1. Of his heart.

heart, that we read of *Eccles.* 11. 9. *Walk in the wayes of thy heart*: this way is secret, *as the way of a bird in the ayr*, men cannot find it out. This way of a mans heart it lyes in his opinions, in his intentions, in his resolutions and affections: and it is a mans duty to find out the way of God in all these.

2. Of his life.

And there is the way of a mans life. That takes in a mans whole conversation toward God and toward men. And as to both these wayes of men, there is a way of God. Our Saviour calls it *the narrow way*, Matth. 7. 14. And the Lord saith concerning *Abraham*, *I know him, that he will command his children and his houshold, that they shall keep the way of the Lord*, Gen. 18. 19. and that was it, which in the midst of *Jobs* afflictions he comforted himself withall, *My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and have not declined*, Job 23. 11. The word there used, signifieth *firmiter apprehendere*; that way which God chalked out to him, he took hold of. This way is oftentimes so dark, that Gods own people, wise and

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holy

holy men cannot find it out, *they grope for the wall as the blind, they grope as if they had no eyes: and ſtumble at noon-day as in the night*, Iſa. 59. 10.

2. The great skill of a Chriſtian lyes in this, to underſtand in the way of his heart and life, what is the way of God. *The wiſdom of the prudent is to underſtand his way*, Prov. 14. 8. Wherein lyes a godly mans wiſdom? not that he can talk of Religion, or talk of more opinions then other men can: no, but to know what God would have him to do. This was it *David* prayed for, *Make me to underſtand the way of thy precepts*, Pſalm 119. 27. *Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy ſtatutes.* So in *Pſalm* 143. 8. *Cauſe me to know the way wherein I ſhould walk. Make thy way ſtraight before my face*, Pſalm 5. 8. Gods way was plain, but it was not ſo before *David*, there were many turnings, ſo as he could not diſcover it; and therefore he prayes that God would make it ſtraight before his face. It is not the leaſt ſtrait Gods people are put unto, to go and not to diſcover the way plain: to ſee but part of their way: therefore their great wiſdom lyes in this, to underſtand their way. It made *Job* weary of his life; *Why is light given to a man whoſe way is hid?* Job 3. 23. What, hid from God, doth he mean? no, he ſaith of God, *He knoweth the way that I take*, Job 23. 10. how then was it hid? from himſelf. He did not know the meaning of God, why he was brought into this affliction, what duty God required of him in this eſtate, it made his life burdenſome to him. God doth many times try the judgement of his people; as he hedges up their way in point of ſin; ſo alſo ſometimes in point of duty, that they know not what God would have them to do.

A Chriſtians great skill is, to know the way of God in both.

3. When a man hath found out the way, it is marvellous hard to keep it: there be variety of deviations, crooked paths, turnings to the right hand and to the left; therefore as a man muſt *keep his heart with all diligence*, ſo he had need *ponder the path of his feet*, Prov. 4. 23, and 26. there are turnings to the right hand by way of exceſs; and turnings to the left hand by way of defect, and there is a proneneſs in men to wander.

It is hard to keep in Gods way being found.

Sheep of all other creatures are apt to wander and not to return. *I have gone aſtray like a ſheep that is loſt*, ſaith *David*,

Psal. 119.176. *Ye were as sheep going astray*, saith the Apostle, 1 *Pet.* 2. 25. Nay there is this evil in the hearts of men, they love to wander from the way of God: the Lord complains so of his people, *thus have they loved to wander*, Jer. 14. 10. and as there are many turnings, so there are many false guides that mislead men. There is *a way that is good in a mans own eyes*, ignorance, inadvertency, and worldly-mindedness, these misguide men: *the way of life is above to the wise*, Prov. 15. 24. *the way of holiness is an high-way*, Isa. 35. 8. and men that look but to the earth, no wonder if they find it not. There is a great deal of cowardise in men, they are ready to say, *a Lion is in the way*. Nay there is *a fashion of this world*, *a course of the world*, Eph. 2. 2. and *a spirit of the world*, 1 Cor. 2. 12. and that spirit of the world frames the hearts of men to that fashion of the world: so that as the great ones go, so the other follow them, as sheep in a tract. It is with men, as *Job* 29. 25. *Job* speaks of himself, as a man in authority. *I choose out their way for them*: it is the manner of men in authority to choose the way for others, and the most follow after them, and this makes it hard to keep Gods way.

Christ hath undertaken to lead his flock in this way.

4. Jesus Christ hath undertaken to shew his the way, and to keep them in it: when you are in the dark, he will shew you; when you are out of your way, he will lead you into it. But how doth Christ lead his flock?

1. By his word.

1. He leads them by his Word: that is *a lanthorn to their feet, and a light to their paths*, Psal. 119. 105. therefore it is *Solomons* Counsel: *Bind the Commandments continually upon thine heart, tye them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee, when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee, when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee*, Prov. 6. 21, 22. Keep the Commandments, they are your guides; when you walk by the way, these will direct you. So *Psal.* 43. 3. *David* was in a wilderness, and he knew not the way out. What was the guidance now that *David* begs? *Oh send out thy light and thy truth, let them lead me* שלח it signifies to send, as one sends a messenger. *Send out thy light and thy truth as a guide.* And Gods usual manner is, when he brings his children into straits, to give them greater light then ever before. You have an instance in *Luther*. What should lead *Luther* unto the reformation of the

the Church? the great light that God gave him in for the understanding of that place in *Rom.* 1.17. *Therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith*; upon which he sayes, *Statim mihi apparuit nova facies Scripturæ*, the Scripture appeared to him with a new face, then what he saw before.

2. Christ leads his people by his Spirit, *as many as are led by the Spirit, are the sons of God*, Rom.8.14. So *David* prayes, *Thy Spirit is good, let that lead me into the land of uprightness*, Psal. 143. 10. and that is the Promise, *thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, this is the way walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, or when ye turn to the left*, Isa. 30. 21. Gods Spirit is *a Spirit of judgement*, as well as *a spirit of burning*: a spirit of direction as well as of Sanctification. And that promise was not peculiar to the Apostles concerning the Spirit, *He shall lead you into all truth*, John 16. 13. but it belonged to all believers. 2. By his Spirit

3. He leads them by his own example and the examples of the Saints. *They follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*; and that is one end of his going before them. *He hath left us an example, that we should follow his steps*, 1 Pet. 2. 21. *All that abide in him, ought to walk as he also walked*, 1 John 2. 6. If a Cross be in their way, they must take it up as he did. And so *James* 5. 10. *Take my brethren the Prophets for an example*: examine what the Saints have done in such cases; and that will shew you your way. 3. By his own example.

4. He leads them by their own prayers; *with supplications will I lead them*, Jer. 31. 9. it is the same word that is used in *Zach.* 12. 10. *I will pour out on them a spirit of grace and supplication.* The hints that the people of God receive in prayer, and the byassing of their hearts is no small means to find out the right way, and to help them to walk in it. When the Lord stirs up the hearts of his people in prayer, that their hearts are drawn out to such a thing, and that with importunity to wrestle with God about it, being not contrary to the express Word, it is a great help to find out what the way of God is. And so God by prayer strengthens the hearts of his people in their way; in taking such a course, a mans spirit is established, his objections answered, mountains made plain. 4. By their own prayers.

When God doth this to us in a way of prayer, then he guides us in our way. This course *Ezra* took, *to seek of the Lord a right way*, Ezra 8. 21. by prayer a man may find his way.

5. With his eye.

5. He leads them with his eye, that is the expression *Psal.* 32. 8. *I will guide thee with mine eye, or I will counsel thee, with mine eye upon thee.* So it may be rendred. The promise is, *blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*, Matth. 5. 8. See God? how? only in glory hereafter? no, but they shall see his way here. So *Heb.* 12. 14. *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*; then a man sees Gods way when he walks with him. God sometimes hides his face from his people, and that is like the breach that God made in *David* when he smote *Uzzah*, which put *David* to a stop. When God turns away his face, a child of God concludes, surely I have deviated, I am out of Gods way; but while they enjoy the light of Gods countenance, so long they know they are in the way of God.

6. By special hints of providence.

6. Christ leads his people by special hints of Providence. There is a *nutus Dei*, a speaking of Providence: and Gods people know, it is their duty to serve Providence, as well as to observe Promises, *hear the rod*, Mic. 6. 9. And not only afflicting Providences have a voyce, but other Providences. When God did make the *Egyptians*, who were formerly enemies to the *Israelites* departure out of *Egypt*, to be now the promoters of it; how did this point out the *Israelites* way? When the King of *Persia* shall command the building of the Temple; When *the ten Kings shall hate the whore, and burn her flesh with fire.* When they who have so much opposed the work of God, shall now come on to be actors in it; What an hint of Providence is this? *Saul*, many despised him when he was made King, but *there were some whose hearts God had touched, these followed him*, which was a good hint of Providence, 1 *Sam.* 10. 26, 27. *Eleazar*, when *Rebekah* came forth to him, and used such words and carriage towards him, as answered his prayer, he took it for a good sign, *Gen.* 24. and for such, as observe God in these Providences, they shall find light to lead them. Thus you shall find, when you have been in a doubt touching your way, and have gone into the Sanctuary; Christ hath either sent out his light by the Word, or by his Spirit,

Spirit, or given you an example of his own or some of his Saints, he hath either led thee by prayer, or by his eye, or some special Providence. For he hath undertaken to lead his flock.

What an happy and glorious condition then is a godly man in, that in every strait and exigency, he is under the guidance of Christ? and on the other side, how miserable a thing is it for a man to have no other guidance, but that of Sathan or the spirit of the world? And this will appear by these considerations. 5. The happiness of being thus led by Christ. He leads his people.

1. The Lord Christ leads his people clearly, he lets them see their way plain. It is a glorious promise which you have in *Isa.* 4. 5. *The Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount* Zion, *and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence.* There are two things promised, direction and protection: and the Promise is not peculiar only to the people of *Israel*: but it extends to all Gods people, and he saith, you shall see your way as plain as the children of *Israel* did, when they had a pillar of fire, and a pillar of a cloud; and that *Isa.* 42. 16. is a choyce Scripture, *I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked paths straight.* The Lord speaks of the perplexed condition his people were in, and they knew not how to get out of it: and he tells them, I will lead them by a way they knew not; I will make darkness light before them, that they shall see their way. 1. Clearly.

2. In all the duties the Lord calls his children unto, he leads them gently, *he shall gently lead those that are with young*, Isa. 40. 11. that is, the Lord shall lead you forth to those duties that are not beyond your strength: as in all your afflictions, he proportions your crosses to your strength and graces: so he proportions your duties too. *The fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart-wheele turned about upon the Cummin: but the fitches are beaten out with a staffe, and the Cummin with a rod*, Isa. 28. 27. he speaks it there of afflictions, and they are disposed according to discretion: a Cart-wheele for the corn, a staffe for the fitches, and a rod 2. Gently.

a rod for the Cummin. So the Lord deals with his people in point of duties. God saith, *I taught* Ephraim *to go, taking them by their armes*, Hos. 11. 3. he leads them gently by the arm, as a nurse doth a child, according to its strength.

3. Sweetly. 3. He leads them sweetly, that they follow him, because he goes before them; and they follow him readily and chearfully. So in *Hos.* 11. 4. *I drew them with the cords of a man, with bands of love*, he doth not draw them by compulsion. The Spirit of the Lord is a free and spontaneous spirit, and such are those that are led by him. *He leadeth them besides the still waters.* No wonder if they be willing to follow, though it be in disconsolate duties, if they see Christ going before them.

4. Unerringly. 4. He leadeth them unerringly in a way of holiness. *An high-way shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those: the wayfaring man though a fool shall not err therein*, Isa. 35. 8. it is a way of holiness, that Christ leads his people in, and though they be accounted fools, yet they shall walk in it unerringly. How blessed a thing is it to be under the guidance of Christ!

And see the happiness of those who are thus guided, by the Contrary. What a miserable thing is it, when God leaves a man unto himself! It is a strange expression, that in *Job* 12. 17. *he leadeth Counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the Judges fools.* Suitable to that in *Psalm* 107. 40. *He poureth contempt upon Princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way.* What a dangerous thing is it to be left to turn aside unto crooked paths, such the Lord will *lead forth with the workers of iniquity. If men walk in the sparks of their own kindling, this they shall have of the Lords hand, they shall lye down in sorrow*, Isa. 50. 11. Do but consider what a miserable thing it is to be deserted of the Lord. There is a threefold desertion; in point of comfort, in point of strength, and in point of light and direction. And it is as sad a thing for the Lord to leave a man in the dark in respect of direction, as in respect of consolation. When a man shall be able to say; I am a poor soul apt to wander, not able to direct mine own way; but yet, though I am naturally a fool, yet the

the Lord hath said, in the way of holiness fools shall not err, what a comfort is this?

But what shall a man do, that he may have the Lord Jesus Christ for his leader, that in all my way Christ may go before me, and I may follow him? Those that are in authority, had need take care in this; the accompt of souls and of Kingdoms will be a dreadful accompt: therefore they that have to do with them, had need see their way clear. Now for your direction herein; Would you have the guidance of Jesus Christ, then,

Directions how a man may come to have Christ thus to lead him.

First, renounce the guidance of your own wisdom. Read over the examples of most of the great men in Scripture, and look into your own stories; where was there ever a great man ruined, but by leaning to his own understanding, he took his own way, a way of policy, and that undid him. Let me give you that one instance, *Isa.* 19. 11. *Surely the Princes of* Zoan *are fools, the counsel of the wise Counsellors of* Pharaoh *is become brutish.* What made God turn all their policy into foolishness? because they looked on themselves as men of great wisdom; they said, *I am the son of the wise.* As Christ came to seek and save those that are lost: so he comes to guide and direct no other, Therefore renounce your own wisdom and policy, if you expect he should guide you.

Direct. 1. Renounce the guidance of your own wisdom.

Secondly, yeild your selves tractable to the guidance of Christ. It is an expression in *Isa.* 11. 6. *a little child shall lead them.* They that are led by Christ are tractable, they look not to be drawn. *I will instruct and teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go,* there is such a promise, *Psalm* 32. 8. But there is this caution, *be not ye like the horse and mule that have no understanding; whose mouth must be kept in with bit and bridle.* When men have the Word set before them, shewing them the way of their duty, but they must be halled to it: it doth not suit with their carnal interest, or with their party, this is to be like an horse or mule which have no understanding. If you will not yeild to the guidance and illapses of the Spirit of God in the Word, you are like to be left to be your own guides.

Direct. 2. Be tractable to Christs guidance.

Thirdly, Look up to Jesus Christ for direction every day. It was *Davids* prayer, and should be yours, *Shew me the way wherein*

Direct. 3. Look up to Christ for direction daily.

wherein I should walk, for I lift up mine eye to thee. That man that can say, Lord, thou art my guide; I consult not with flesh and blood; my desire is to have directions from thee: How comfortably may that man walk? See what the sad consequences are of the want of such a guide of your way as Jesus Christ is. Read that place *Isa.* 19. 13, 14, 15. *The Princes of* Zoan *are become fools: the Princes of* Noph *are deceived: they have also seduced* Egypt. *The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused* Egypt *to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit; neither shall there be any work for* Egypt, *which the head or tail, branch or rush may do.* The greatest judgement that can befall a people, is for God to mingle a perverse spirit, a vertiginous spirit among them: for then nothing will prosper which high or low undertake. See then how much necessity you have to look up to Jesus Christ your leader, that you may not be as blind men, that grope for the wall; as those that have no eyes; and that God may not mingle a perverse spirit among you, that may cause you to err in all that you do. So much now for this relation. *Jesus Christ is God the Fathers Shepheard.*

Jesus Christ the man, Gods fellow.

THe other relation in the Text is, *Jesus Christ is the man, Gods fellow. Awake, O sword, against my Shepheard, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

The man.

And here there are two words to be opened, the *man*, and *the man my fellow.*

First, Jesus Christ is here called the man, גבר there be four names given to Christ in Scripture, whereby he is signified to be a man. And every one of them we translate by that word the *man*, but they differ very much.

First, He is called *Adam*, 1 Cor. 15. 45. *the first man* Adam *was made a living soul: the last* Adam *was made a quickning spirit:* and so he is named in reference to his original, of the same dust.

Secondly, He is called *Enosh*, which we render, man; it signifies, weak, feeble, afflicted man. *Psalm* 8. 4. מה־אנוש *what is man?* see what man this was, by comparing this with

Heb.

Heb. 2. 6, 7. where this is applied unto Christ: so a man, as partaker of our humane nature.

Thirdly, he is called *Ish*, which we render man too; but in the Original it signifies *an honourable man*, so the Hebrew commonly *vir formæ*, 1 Sam. 16. 18. a comely personage, *vir verborum*, a man of words, *Exod.* 4. 10. that is, an eloquent man; it is used for a man excellent in any faculty, הנה־איש Behold the man, *Zach.* 6. 12. it is not *Adam*, nor *Enosh*, but *Ish*, the honourable man.

Fourthly, the word in the text גבר *Geber*, *the prevailing*, *the victorious man*; it comes from a word that signifies a mighty man, that hath much authority, and much power.

The other word is עמיתי *my fellow*. The word is differently rendered, some translate it, *proximum*, some *socium*, *amicum*, some συνέργον, fellow-labourer, some *intimum*; all importing thus much, dear to God by intimate acquaintance and communion. My fellow.

The sence will be made up in these three things.

1. Jesus Christ in point of honour is next to God.
2. Jesus Christ in point of Counsel, hath neareſt and most intimate acquaintance with God.
3. Jesus Christ in all the works of God, is Gods fellow-worker; *he is the man, Gods fellow.*

First, Jesus Christ is next in honour and glory to God; he is exalted above all creatures, *he hath obtained a more excellent name than the Angels*, Heb. 1. 4. *above every name that is named, not only in this world, but in the world to come*, that is, an honour, dignity, advancement above every name, *Ephes.* 1. 21. There be among the creatures different degrees of honour; there are several ranks and rows of men; Jesus Christ is advanced above the higheſt of these, *He is the Prince of the Kings of the earth.* I. Christ is next in glory to God.

There is a different rank of Saints and Angels in heaven; the stars differ from one another in glory. Jesus Christ is above the glorified Saints, he is *the King of Saints*. Angels have difference in glory according to their employment. Jesus Christ is *the head of all Principalities and Powers*. I speak of Christ, not as God, so he is ἰσος θεῷ, *equal with God*; but as God-man.

In reference to God.

For clearing this, look on him with reference, first to God, secondly to the creatures.

In reference to God, look on him in two things.

1. God hath honoured him with the highest titles

1. The Lord hath honoured him with the highest titles, which cannot agree to any creature: so God calls him, *My first-born, higher then the Kings of the earth. Angelus faciei, the Angel of my presence*, Isa. 63. 9. *Holiness of holinesses.* So he is called *Dan.* 9. 24. קדש קדשים which we translate, *the most holy Jehovah.* In *Isa.* 6. 1. *I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne.* Who was that? look into *John* 11. 40. the Evangelist speaking of Christ, and quoting the tenth verse of this Chapter, saith, *Thus spake* Esaias, *when he beheld his glory, and spake of him.*

2. Gods great design is to exalt him above all creatures.

2. Gods great design next to his own glory, hath been to exalt his son above all creatures in heaven and earth. Therefore he saith of him as Mediator, *Let all the Angels of God worship him*, Heb. 1. 6. he layeth a charge upon his Angels to worship him. And for men, the great command of the Gospel is, *Believe in the name of the Lord Jesus.* What is the great sin of the Devil? his *enmity against the seed of the woman*: that is his great sin and his great judgement. God hath fastned the eyes of all the creatures upon him. *Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth*, Isa. 42. 1. *Behold the man whose name is the Branch*, Zach. 6. 12. then Gods aim is to honour Jesus Christ above all.

In reference to the creatures.

2. Consider him in reference to the creatures.

1. There is more of God in him.

1. There is more of God in him, then in all the creatures in heaven and earth. *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*, Col. 2. 9. the best creature receiveth the spirit by measure, *he without measure*, John 3. 34. *he is fairer than the children of men, God hath anointed him with the oyl of gladness above his fellows*, Psalm 45. Jesus Christ hath fellows in grace, but not in glory.

2. He hath more of Soveraignty.

2. There is more authority, power, and soveraignty in Jesus Christ as Mediator, than in all the creatures, men and Angels. He saith it of himself, *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth*, Matth. 28. 18. The Angels, Jesus Christ hath authority over them: in the first of *Ezekiel*, there be wheels which note the passages of providences here below, and

and there be living creatures, that is, the Angels that act them, but there is a spirit that guides the living creatures, *whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went.* It is questioned by Divines, whether the Angels had any power of administration before the second Covenant took place: and it is conceived by them, that when Jesus Christ undertook the administration of this Covenant, the Angels were given to him as servants: and so when he shall give up the Kingdom to the Father, 1 *Cor.* 15.24. it shall be *when he hath put down all rule, and all authority and power,* which *Calvin* takes to be meant, not only of all power here below, *de principatu Angelico:* but of all power above too. Jesus Christ is over the Angels, and over the Devils, they could not enter into the swine without his permission, *Mat.* 8.31, 32.

3. All religious worship of the creature is to be given to him. All men are to believe in him as Mediator. It is the duty the Lord calls for, *ye believe in God, believe also in me,* John 14. 1. All are to pray to him. To whom did *Abraham* make his prayer on the behalf of *Sodom*? Gen. 18. It was to the Lord Jesus, one of the three Angels that came to him: yea, not only prayers are to be made to him, but for him, or concerning him, *Psalm* 72. 15. *Prayer also shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he be praised.* All the prayers of the creatures, and all the praises of the creatures shall be to Christ and concerning Christ. See how all the creatures joyn together in this; *Rev.* 5. 11, 12, 13. *And I beheld, and I heard the voyce of many Angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the Elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voyce, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the Sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, blessing, honour, glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.* And all obedience of the creatures shall be to him. I take that to be the meaning of that place, *Gen.* 49. 10. *The Scepter shall not depart from* Judah, nor a *Law-giver from between his feet untill* Shilo *come*; *and unto*

3. All religious worship is to be given to him.

him shall the gathering of the people be. יקהת we render it, the gathering; but the word signifies, the obedience, the bowing, the submission of the people, this shall be to him.

4. The happiness of the creatures depends on him.

4. Upon him depends the happiness of all creatures that are capable of happiness: Angels and Saints. Angels, it is much questioned, whether ever any creature yet had the beatifical vision, but Angels. The Schoolmen tell us, that the confirmation the Angels have by Christ, is by the beatifical vision. But this the Scripture puts out of question, *Jesus Christ is made the head of all principalities and powers*: and so he is to them an head of eminence and influence: and to all the Saints he is the foundation of happiness, he is called *the root of* David, *Rev.* 5. 5. *David non est radix ejus, sed ille Davidis*, saith *Bernard. David* is not his root, but he is *Davids* root: the mercies of *David*, were the mercies of the Covenant made with Christ. Now lay all these together. Jesus Christ is exalted far above all creatures, God hath honoured him with the highest titles, it was Gods great design to advance him above all creatures. He hath more of God in him, then all the creatures, more authority, power and soveraignty, then they all; all religious worship of the creatures is due to him, and their happiness depends upon him; and you will easily conclude from hence, that in point of honour and glory Jesus Christ is the man *Gods fellow*.

II. Christ next to God in intimacy of Counsels.

Secondly, He is the man Gods fellow; that is, he is next to God in intimacy of his Counsels. Jesus Christ is acquainted with all the Counsels of God. God doth not things as men do, *pro renatâ*, but by counsel, and by counsel before the world was. *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world*, Acts 15. 18. *He worketh all things according to the Counsel of his own will*, Eph. 1. 11. yet all these Counsels of God concerning the Creature, Jesus Christ as Mediator is acquainted with.

I. He knows all Gods decrees

1. God hath made known to him all his decrees; so *Rev.* 13. 8. you have mention of *the Lambs book of life*, and names written therein: and at the last day he speaks in that language, to some that would fain scrape acquaintance with him, οὐδέποτε ἔγνων ὑμᾶς, Matth. 7. 23. *I never knew you*, your names were never written in my heart: all those whom God hath appointed

appointed to life, Christ knows, for he is acquainted perfectly with all the decrees of God.

2. He is acquainted with all Gods ends. You may know mens purposes, but you may not know the grounds of them, and so you may miscarry in any work you do for them. But Jesus Christ doth not only do Gods work; but he serves his ends: and therefore he is called Gods servant. *Jehu* did Gods work, but he did not serve Gods end; but Jesus Christ serves all the ends of God. 2. All Gods ends.

3. All the works of God are known to him *The son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doth*, John 5. 19, 20. God doth nothing, but he manifesteth it unto Christ. He knew the time of his own sufferings, *this is your hour, and the power of darkness*, Luke 22. 53. he knew the time to work a miracle, *woman, mine hour is not yet come*, John 2. 4. Jesus Christ knows the time of the conversion of every soul; the time for pouring out the vials; and for *Ezekiels* temple to be built; and when the new *Jerusalem* shall come down from God out of heaven. As for that place in *Mat.* 24. where Christ, speaking of the day of judgement, saith, *Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the Angels of heaven, but my Father only: so as Christ himself did not know that day.* I answer, Christ as man might grow in knowledge, so the text tells us, *he increased in wisdom, and knowledge*, Luke 2. this growth in knowledge what was it? it was the different degree of the manifestation of the Deity to the humane nature: but several degrees of this manifestation were reserved for Christ in heaven; else the humane nature would have been as much glorified here as it is in heaven. It is the observation of a learned Divine, till Christs ascension into heaven, the time of the end of the world and the day of judgement was not communicated to the humane nature; but when he came to heaven, then he takes the book out of the hand of him, that sits upon the throne, as you have it in the fifth of the *Revelations*, and is now fully acquainted with all the works of God. 3. All Gods works.

4. He is acquainted with the whole Word of God. The Angels themselves do not know all the Word of God, as may appear by comparing *Rev.* 19. 10. with *Rev.* 22. 8, 9. in the former 4. The whole Word of God.

former the Angel saith to *John*, *I am of thy brethren, that have the testimony of Jesus. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of Prophesie.* Then that Angel must have a spirit of Prophesie, or else he could not understand the Scripture. And in the other place he saith, *I am of them that keep the sayings of this book.* He could not reveal to *John* more then was first revealed to him, but Jesus Christ reveals to us all the Word of God. So as in this respect he is the man Gods fellow.

III. Christ Gods fellow-labourer.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ is Gods fellow-labourer; whatever God doth, Christ works with him. God useth his creatures as instruments, and when he hath done this or that work by them, he layes them aside again: but he doth not so with Christ; the administration of all things is committed unto him. *That there is an instrumental fitness in Christ as Mediator to serve all Gods ends, we have shewed on another subject*: but that God doth nothing without him, and doth all by him, will appear in the consideration of these six heads.

God doth all by Christ.

1. In revelation of himself.

1. For matter of Revelation. God never manifested himself to the Creature, but by Christ. All the revelations of God to the creature, since the fall, have been by Christs discoveries. The ancient Saints, that Preached before the flood, *it was the Spirit of Christ gave them their Prophesie*, 1 Pet. 3. 18, 19, 20. It was Christ that gave the Law, *Gal.* 3. 19. *the Law was ordained by* Moses *in the hand of a Mediator.* The Mediator typical was *Moses*, but the Mediator real was Christ. The Prophets had their Revelation by Christ. *Searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signifie, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow*, 1 Pet. 1. 11. And not only men, but Angels have their Revelations by Christ; therefore the Angels come in, and bless the Lamb for opening the book, *Rev.* 5. 11. when God manifests himself to the creature, he doth it by Christ.

2. In supportation of the creatures.

2. God supports, and upholds all the creatures by him. How came it to pass, the world was not destroyed by the fall? God gave Jesus Christ for *a Covenant to the people, to establish the earth*, Isa. 49. 8. and when he shall restore the world, it shall be by him. For so Christ saith, *behold I make all things new*, Rev. 21. 5.

3. God

3. God governs the world, but it is by Christ the Mediator. *My Father worketh hitherto*, saith Christ, *and I work*, John 5. 17. he speaks it of all the works of Providence. The Angels are acted by him, the spirit of the living creatures is in the wheels; if afflictions come, they are sent by him; if it be the sword, it is *the rod of my son, contemning every tree*, Ezek. 21. 10. men are compared to trees; take the highest or lowest, Cedar or shrub, it shall spare none. Why? it is the rod of my son. In *Dan.* 10. 20, 21. there was a mighty war between the King of *Grecia*, and the King of *Persia*, untill *Alexander* had wholly subdued the Persian Monarchy. And how comes it? saith the Angel, *I will return to fight with the King of* Persia, *and when I am gone forth, the Prince of* Grecia *shall come.* And who is he that doth the work? why, saith the Angel, *there is none that standeth with me in these things, but* Michael *your Prince.* It is Jesus Christ that governs all. 3. In governing the world.

4. The conversion of all souls, and dispensation of all graces, is by him. *God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself; he hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ*, 2 Cor. 5. 18, 19. and *ye will not come to me, saith Christ, that ye might have life*, John 5. 40. As for that expression, *John* 6. 44. *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.* The drawing of God the Father, is to be considered, as conversion is a fruit of Gods electing love. It was the Father that gave the soul to Christ; and when the soul is converted, it is God the Father is looked on as the person offended, and to be satisfied; but all is wrought by Christ. 4. In conversion of souls.

5. God the Father will judge the world by Christ the Mediator. *He hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world, by the man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he raised him from the dead*, Acts 17. 31. At the last day, when God shall give men and Angels their last doom, it shall be by Christ. Yea, 5. He will judge the world by Christ.

6. Not only the dispensations of all things in this world, but in the world to come, shall be in the hand of a Mediator. I speak not of what shall be after the day of judgement, but it is agreed by all till the day of judgement: and our Saviour saith, *all power is given to me in heaven and in earth.* *Cameron* 6. In administration of all things in the world to come.

upon *Heb.* 2. 5. *unto the Angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come*; applies it to heaven, and saith, this world is subjected to men and Angels, good Angels and bad Angels, yea the Devil is called the Prince of this world; but the world to come is subjected to Christ, the Angels shall have no authority there, but Christ alone: and upon *Ephes.* 1. 22. *God hath set him at his own right hand, far above all principalities, and powers, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in the world to come*: that is, saith he, the world to come in glory hereafter. Jesus Christ hath a name above all creatures, he only shall have glory and praise. *Glory be to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.* Thus Jesus Christ is the Man, Gods fellow, he is his fellow-labourer. And so have you the explication of this great truth.

There are but two of these heads, that we shall speak unto in the application. That of Christ, being next unto God the Father in intimacy of Counsel, we shall reserve till we come to speak of him under that relation, the *Counsellor*. We shall now speak of the other two, and there be only two uses we shall make on these two heads.

Use 1. First, *Jesus Christ is the Man, Gods fellow*; that is, he is next to God in honour: and the use we will make of it, is this, then *do you honour the Son, even as you honour the Father*, John 5. 23. Let Jesus Christ as Mediator, have his honour next to God. And here we shall speak to these three things.

Let Christ have honour next to God.

1. To shew you that God is the fountain of all honour.

2. That the Lords main plot is to have all his honour come in from the creature by Jesus Christ.

3. What is that honour God would have to be given to the Son, that I may be able to say, *I do honour the Son, even as I honour the Father.*

God is the fountain of all glory.

First, God is the fountain of all honour and glory. Our Saviour hath taught us to say so, *thine is the glory*, he is *the King of glory*, Psal. 24. 7. he is the King of glory, as he is said to be the King of Nations, that is, *to give them to whom he will*, Dan. 4. 17. and no man shall have any dominion, but where the Lord gives it. Take in that, *Isa.* 7. 8, 9. *The head of* Syria *is* Damascus, *and the head of* Damascus *is* Rezin: *the head*

of

of Ephraim *is* Samaria, *and the head of* Samaria *is* Remaliahs *son.* The enemies threatned mightily, as if they would have burnt up all before them: but saith God, they are but *two smoking fire-brands*, for the head of *Syria* is *Damascus*, that is, this is the utmost bounds of that Kingdom. Let the King of *Assyria* be satisfied, he shall not be more then King of *Damascus*: and the head of *Ephraim* is *Samaria*; *Remaliahs* son shall not enlarge his dominion farther. Men shall have no further dominion, then that which God gives them. And so as in a State, the King is the fountain of honour: so in the world, God is the fountain of glory.

Secondly, all the honour that God hath by the creature, his plot and design is to have it come in to him by Jesus Christ. The Father will be glorified in his Son, and this both for the glory of Christ, and for the glory of God. For you will say, were it not more glory for God to be glorified in himself immediately, then to be glorified in his Son Christ Jesus?

All the honour God hath from the creature he will have by Christ.

I answer, no. First, it is most for the glory of God; for there is a fuller manifestation of God, an higher communion with God by Christ, then in any other way. A fuller manifestation of God. Christ as Mediator is the Scene, on which all the attributes of God are acted in the higheſt way; and in such a way as they could not be in any other. All the persons in the Trinity have more glory this way then any other. Christ as Mediator, is *speculum Divinitatis*; The glass of the Divine nature. *We all beholding with open face in him as in a glass, the glory of the Lord*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. and this makes way for a fuller communion between God and the creature, whereby the creature is made capable of receiving an higher glory. There was a moral union, which man should have had with God if he had stood; but this makes way for a mystical union. And to be made one with the person of the Son of God is the higheſt union, and a ground of the higheſt communication: Therefore to sin against God in Christ, is a higher way of sinning, then to sin against God immediately; because the higheſt way of glorifying God, is, to glorifie God in Christ. This is that which heightens sins against the Gospel. That is the first, it is greatly for the glory of God, that all the glory he hath from the creature should come in by Jesus Christ.

1. This is most for the honour of the Father.

2. This is most for the honour of the Son.

And this is most for the honour of the Son too: the highest honour that Christ hath as Mediatour is in this, that God hath made him *caput anguli, the head of the corner*, Psal. 118. 22. *the chief corner-stone.* So you have him called *Ephes.* 2. 20. and it amounts to thus much. 1. The corner-stone is chief in the foundation, on it the weight of the building lyes: therefore in the place last mentioned, the Church is said *to be built upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone*; he sustains the building.

2. The corner-stone joyns and cements the building, that finishes the work, and is the glory of it, as you will see, if you compare it with that expression, *Psal.* 44. 12. *that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.* Jesus Christ is *fundamentum, firmamentum & ornamentum Ecclesiæ*: he is the foundation, the establishment, the complement, the top-stone, and perfection of the whole building, and this is much for the glory of Jesus Christ. That is the second head. As God is the fountain of all glory: so all the glory that God will have from the creature, his design is, it shall come in by Christ, which is much for the honour both of God and of Christ.

3. The glory to be given to Christ, is

Religious worship.

Thirdly, what is the glory God would have to be given unto Christ, that we may honour the Son even as we honour the Father, and that the Father may be thus glorified in the Son?

I answer in general, the glory that Christ must have, is a religious worship. This God calls upon the Angels to give him, *Heb.* 1. 6. *When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him.* Now this religious worship is of two sorts: there is *cultus naturalis & institutus*, natural worship, that flows from the nature of God, it is grounded upon the knowledge of his nature. Instituted worship, that is grounded on the revelation of the will of God, when God hath manifested his will, what way he will be worshipped, that way of worship is instituted worship, and both these are due unto Christ.

Christ is to be honoured with natural worship.

First, he that will honour the Son even as he honours the Father, must honour him with natural worship, and that we shall branch out into ten particulars. 1. He

1. He that will thus honour Christ, as he honours the Father, must make it his business to know Christ, as he doth to know the Father. The great worship man did owe to God by the law of his creation, was to study the knowledge of God, and to have high contemplations of his infinite excellency. It was a great part of Divine worship in *Paul*, Phil. 3. 8. *Yea, doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord,* ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως, *for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.* The highest way of worshipping God is to enure the soul to have high apprehensions of God. You think it may be there is no worship of God, but that which is outward, praying, and hearing, and the like. But this inward worship of God, in high admirations and contemplations of him, when the soul is abased in it self from the knowledge of Gods infinite perfections, this is the highest way of worship of God, and so it is to Christ. It was the speech of *Agur*, that he spake to *Ithiel* and *Ucal*, which are names of Christ. And what doth he bewail? *Prov.* 30. 2, 3. *I am more brutish then any man, and have not the understanding of a man: I have not learned wisdom*: and what knowledge did he lack? saith he, *I have not the knowledge of the holy.* Now for a man to come to Christ, and bewail his brutishness in this respect, that he hath not the knowledge of the holy, and to have his thoughts much upon him, this is that which God requires. For God points your thoughts to him. *Behold my servant*, Isa. 42. 1. *and behold the man, the branch*, Zach. 6. 12. 1. By knowing of him.

2. He that will thus honour Christ, must believe on him. *Ye believe in God, believe also in me*, Joh. 14. 1. this is to honour the Son as you honour the Father. Sometimes guilt of sin ariseth in your consciences. Now for a man being thus stung, to look up to the brasen Serpent upon the pole, and by faith to fetch in healing; this is to honour the Son as you honour the Father. Sometimes storms of afflictions arise, and for a man then to draw near to Christ, and stay his soul on him as on the rock of ages, this is an high act of worship. Sometimes lust ariseth, and a man is toyled with temptations. Now to act faith on Christ, that *sits as a refiner* and purifier to purge away our corruptions, these are the wayes by which 2. By believing on him.

Christ is to be honoured. When war is threatned, to come to Christ as a shield; when all is in confusion and desolation, now to look up to him as a wise Artificer, that is able out of all this confusion to bring forth a glorious Fabrick; When difficulties and dangers appear, and we see nothing but a wilderness before us; then to look up to Christ as *Præruptor*, so he is called, for that is spoken of Christ, *Mic.* 2. 13. *the breaker is come up before them*, to look on him as one, that, when difficulties and dangers present themselves, will break through them all: this is an high act of worship.

3. By loving of him.

3. If we will thus honour Jesus Christ, we must love him as we do love God the Father, *Isa.* 5. 1. saith the Propher, *Now will I sing unto my well-beloved*, who is this? the Lord Jesus Christ. The exercise of acts of love to him are acts of worship. *Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity*, Ephes. 6. 24. You must love him as the Father, as well when he threatens, as when he promiseth, that was the temper of the Spouse *A bundle of myrrhe is my beloved unto me: he shall lye all night between my breasts*, Cant. 1. 13. Jesus Christ is not alway honey, he is sometimes myrrhe; and when he is so, the Church must say, he shall lye all night between my breasts. You do not know how your love to Christ may be put to the tryal. Remember that *Rev.* 13. 10. *Here is the patience and the faith of the Saints.* There will come a time, when the truth of your patience, and of your faith, and of your love too, may be put to the tryal.

4. By fearing of him.

4. If you will honour Christ as you honour the Father, you must fear him. When God tells *Israel*, he would *send his Angel before them*, he bids them, *Beware of him, obey his voyce, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him*, Exod. 23. 21. fear to sin against Christ, as you do to sin against God.

5. By praying to him.

5. You must pray to Christ and for him; that is, for those things that concern his glory. This is the worship that *Abraham* performed, when he prayed for *Sodom*, he prayed to Jesus Christ, one of the Angels that appeared to him. And it is expressly spoken of Christ, *prayers shall be made for him*, Psal. 72. 15. that is, for the accomplishment of those promises that concern his glory and his Churches good.

6. You

6. You must rejoyce in the advancement of Jesus Christ; that is the worship they performed to him, *Rev.* 11. 16. *the four and twenty Elders that sate before the throne, fell upon their faces and worshipped God.* How did they worship God? *we give thee thanks O Lord God Almighty, which wast, and art, and art to come, because thou hast taken unto thy self thy great power and raigned.* They bless God for the exaltation of Christ. 6. By rejoycing in his advancement.

7. You must ascribe all glory to him, and give him thanks; that is the worship of the Saints and Angels, *Rev.* 5. 12, 13. they cry, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing*, &c. 7. By ascribing all glory to him.

8. You must bless your selves in him, count your selves happy in him alone. Men shall be blessed in him, *all Nations shall call him blessed*, Psal. 72. 17. 8. By blessing our selves in him.

9. Bring presents to him. The Prophesie is of Christ under the type of *Solomon, to him shall be given of the gold of* Sheba, *the Kings of* Tarshish *and of the Isles, shall bring presents, the Kings of* Sheba *and* Seba *shall offer gifts*, Psal. 72. but especially observe that in *Isa.* 16. 1. *Send ye the Lamb to the Ruler of the land*, which is generally by most Interpreters applyed to Christ, though in a different sense: some read it thus, *send the Lamb the Ruler*, as if it were intended of his person; others take it to be meant of the honour due to him. 9. By bringing presents to him.

Lastly, Cast down your Crowns and fall on your faces before him, so did the four and twenty Elders, *Rev.* 4. 10. *they fell down before him that sate upon the throne, and worshipped him that liveth for ever, and cast their Crowns before the throne.* Do you abase your glory, when you come into his presence. These are the wayes God will have his Son glorified in a way of natural worship. 10. By abasing our selves before him.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is to be glorified by instituted worship; and this we shall speak to under six heads. Christ is to be honoured with instituted worship.

1. You must acknowledge, it is Jesus Christ only can, and he only is appointed of God, to raise up a Church, he only is the builder of the Church, *Heb.* 3. 3. Christ is said to be the builder of the house the Church, and therefore hath more honour then the house. Take the Church, as it is made up of 1. He is appointed to raise up a the Church.

the whole family in heaven and earth, the Saints on earth and the Saints in heaven. Jesus Christ hath more honour then the house, because he is the builder of it. So it was Prophesied of him, *Zach.* 6. 12. *The man whose name is the Branch, he shall build the Temple of the Lord.* If a Church be raised any where, Christ is the builder of it. And that this may be cleared to you, consider, there was a Church raised among the Jews: who was the builder of it? the Prophet tells you, *It was the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts*, Isa. 5. he planted it, he watered it, he fenced it. And in the last dayes, who shall build *Ezekiels* Temple? *Ezek.* 40. 3, 4. you shall see there Jesus Christ with a line in his hand and a measuring reed, like an architect he doth it. And when *New* Jerusalem *shall come down from God out of heaven*, who is the builder of it? *He that sate upon the throne said, behold I make all things new*, Rev. 21. 5. and who is that? he tells you himself in the next verse, *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.*

2. He only can institute Ordinances and abrogate them.

2. It is he alone that hath the power to institute Ordi-
'nances; and this you must acknowledge too, if you will ho-
'nour him with instituted worship. Ordinances in the
'Church, they are like money in the State, it is only the
'Supream authority makes them go for currant coyn. None
'but Christ can institute or abrogate Ordinances. He it was,
'that said of the Jewish Ordinances, that they should be im-
'posed only *till the time of reformation*, Heb. 9. 10. and he
'hath appointed the Ordinances of the Gospel, that they
'shall be the last Ordinances, there shall be no new ones till
'his coming; as it is said of one of them, *in this we shew forth*
'*the Lords death till he come*, 1 Cor. 11. 26. No man can put
'an Institution on any thing, but he dishonours Christ, and
'denies him the honour of instituted worship: that were *to*
'*set up an Image of jealousie*, Ezek. 8. 3. all humane inventions
'are no other. If men will appoint garments and places, and
'signs to put men in mind of holy things, as garments, to put
'them in mind of purity, steps, to mind them of *sursum corda*,
'Crosses and Crucifixes, to remember the sufferings of Christ,
'or any thing else in worship, or as an act of worship, this is
'to institute Ordinances: what ever in this or the like kind is
'done (for the vain mind of man will still be tampering) is an

injury

'injury done to Jesus Christ in instituted worship. And so 'for abrogating Ordinances: none can abrogate, but he 'who appoints them. When Christ hath instituted private 'communion of Saints, that they should converse one with 'another, to impart their graces, to communicate their ex-'periences, so it be not to the contempt of publick Ordi-'nances, for men to forbid and deny this Ordinance: When 'the Lord hath instituted Preaching, for men to say, none 'are to preach by way of office, but by way of utterance on-'ly, is to abrogate an Ordinance. If men will abrogate 'Church-censures, when Christ hath appointed Church-'censures as well as seals, threatnings as well as promises; 'for men to say, this is a Papal authority, it is a dishonour to 'Christs instituted worship.

3. None can appoint the end why Ordinances shall be used, but Jesus Christ. Flesh is apt to make sinful advantages of the spiritual things of Christ. The Apostle tells us, *Phil* 1. 15. *Some did preach Christ out of envy*, and what was their end? *Supposing to add affliction to my bonds.* So some there were, that compelled brethren to be circumcised, *that they might glory in their flesh, and draw Disciples after them.* So in *Rev.* 13. 16, 17. Antichrist makes use of Church-censures to bring in worshippers, *that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name*: it is spoken of excommunication, whereby they were deprived of civil commerce. He makes use of that Ordinance to advance his way. Now for to use the Ordinances of Jesus Christ to advance parties, or fleshly ends, or for base respects, is to dishonour Jesus Christ, who as he only can institute, so he only can appoint the end of Ordinances, and none else may do it. 3. He only can appoint the end of Ordinances.

4. He doth appoint, and he only can appoint, who shall partake in these Ordinances. Under the Law the Lord appointed Circumcision and the Passeover: and for the Passover he tells them, *no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof*: for such a person to intrude, or for them to suffer it, had been a dishonour to Christ. Those Ordinances under the Gospel, which the Lord hath made common, we must not restrain: but such as he hath appointed to be peculiar, are not be made common. 4. He only can appoint who shall partake of Ordinances.

'For Baptism, it is greatly questioned, whether their children have a right to Baptism, who have been themselves baptized, and have walked contrary to their profession ever since: and others deny, that those children that are begotten in fornication ought to be admitted to baptism, untill the Parents have manifested their repentance; if but so much be granted, it will cut off the children of all scandalous persons. This is sure, these Church-Ordinances are not to be dispenced, but to such for whom they are appointed.

'So for the Lords Supper, it is an Ordinance appointed only for *them that are alive*. And as in the Word, our work is to give every one his portion. We may not *say to the righteous, it shall go ill with you; nor to the wicked, it shall go well with you.* Church-officers are but Stewards, they can but ὀρθοτομεῖν, *rightly divide* to every one what Christ hath allowed them. Church-officers, it is not in their power to make them members of a Church, that Christ never made members, nor to give them the priviledges of members to whom Christ never gave them. Whosoever sets up other Ordinances, or useth Ordinances set up by Christ, to other ends, or administers them to other persons knowing, then such as Christ hath appointed them to, and for, dishonoureth Christ.

5. He only appoints Church-Officers.

5. He only must appoint Church-officers, those who may dispence Church-ordinances. As in a State, none can set up a new Court, or create a new Office, but the Supream authority. So here, you can make no new Officer in the Church, which Christ hath not made, nor restrain the power and exercise of their Office, which Christ hath appointed; they must have that power which he hath given them. If men shall say, there is no such Officer as a Pastor, or a Teacher in a Church: yet the Lord hath said, he hath given *some to be Pastors, and some Teachers*, Ephes. 4. 11. If men say, we will distribute our own alms, when the Lord saith, I have appointed the office of a Deacon for this end; these Officers must stand, and none may appoint others, nor may any restrain them from exercising their office. 'It is not for the Magistrate to say, you shall administer the Sacraments thus and thus, you shall dispence Church-censures thus and thus; this

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is injurious to Jesus Christ. As there must be the same Officers, so they must have the same power Christ hath appointed unto them, and the same extent of power. And it is nothing to say, this power hath been abused, and so it will be. The power that Jesus Christ hath given them, none may take from them.

6. It is Jesus Christ alone, that can unchurch a Church: he it is that threatens it, *I will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent*, Rev. 2. 5. in the last verse of the former Chapter you find, the seven candlesticks are the seven Churches: so that to remove the candlestick, is to take away the Church. It is Christ alone, that can *call them Lo-ammi*, Hos. 1. 9. It belongs to Jesus Christ alone to give to a Church a bill of divorce: and for any to undertake to pronounce a *Lo-ammi* where Christ hath not done it, is to sin highly against Christ. And so much for the first use. Honour the Son even as you honour the Father, seeing he is the Man, Gods fellow, next unto him in point of honour; and if you will do so, you must thus honour him with natural and instituted worship.

6. He only can unchurch a Church.

We come now to the use from the second head, to bear up the spirits of all Gods people in these troublesome times, *Jesus Christ is the Man, Gods fellow*, a co-worker with God in all his administrations towards the creature; and whatsoever God doth in the world, he doth by Jesus Christ. It is true, the Lords wayes at present are in the dark, *it is neither day nor night*; sometimes we hope these clouds will end in a fair day: and sometimes we are ready to say, this evening will end in a sad night: but bear up your spirits all you that are the people of God, remember Jesus Christ hath undertaken the government of all things for your sakes: and suppose evil dayes should come, that *destruction upon destruction be cried*, yet remember that of *Ezek.* 9. 2, 3. when the instruments of vengeance come to destroy the City, Jesus Christ is in the midst of them, to mark those that are his to preservation. The use therefore you should make of this great truth, is that in *John* 14. 1. *Ye believe in God, believe also in me, let not your hearts be troubled.* The words are not to be referred to Christ as God: for as God, so he hath the same essence

Use 2. If Christ be Gods fellow-worker, then believe in him.

with the Father. As God, it cannot be said, all power is given to him. But it is spoken of him as Mediator. Therefore must we honour him as we honour the Father, because *the Father hath committed all judgement to the Son, because he is the son of Man.* Now saith Christ, when you look on God the Father, you look on him, as one who hath power and wisdom enough to uphold you: but looking on me in these dayes of mine *exinanition*, you question, whether you have props enough to maintain your comforts. *Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me.* I would open this a little from that place, *John* 14. 20. *At that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you*: that I am in the Father, in his bosom, in his deerest and tenderest affection; that I am one with him in mercy, counsel, *&c.* I and the Father have the same resolutions, the same compassions towards sinners; then believe in me, as you do in the Father, for I am in the Father, and the Father is in me; all the Attributes of God are manifested in me as Mediator, and work in me. In me the Father judgeth, and ruleth, and administreth all his Attributes. *Ye believe in God, believe also in me; I am in the Father, and the Father is in me: and you in me, and I in you:* that is, you are in my bowels, in my tenderest affection: all that is in me is yours for your good; my merit is yours to justifie you, my spirit is yours to sanctifie you, my wisdom is yours to lead you, my glory and joy you shall enter into. And hence arise three great grounds of Faith. *All the Attributes of God work by Christ, they act in Christ, and all for the Churches good.* So that now as in the first creation, *without him nothing was made that was made*, so in the administration of all things, nothing that is done, is done without him. So in this text he is called *the Man, Gods fellow*, and so *Esa.* 44. 24. *I am the Lord that maketh all things, that stretcheth out the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth,* מאתי *by him that is with me.* Jesus Christ is the great Artificer, by whom he created all at first, and by whom he now administers all things. Now when we consider the present condition of things, how the foundations of the land are moved, and the pillars shake, when in our Cities is left desolation, and the gates are smitten with destruction. *When he that flieth from*

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the noise of the fear, falls into the pit: and he that cometh out of the midst of the pit, is taken in the snare, and the earth reels to and fro, like a drunken man, Isa. 24. 12, 18, 20. When we consider the darkness God brings us into, and consider what a darkness it is, such as I remember you have mentioned, *Isa.* 60. 2. *Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people*, a darkness, a covering darkness, a gross darkness. If it were a darkness in the evening, a man would look for night; but when it is darkness in the morning, *he maketh the morning darkness*, Amos 4. 13. nay a darkness that pursues men, we have striven to get out of darkness, but to this day it pursues us, *darkness shall pursue his enemies*, Nahum 1. 8. When we consider, that the Lord hath kindled a great burning under all our glory, and (to use the Prophets expression) it is like the burning of pitch or lime, [*the people shall be as the burning of lime*, Isa. 33. 12. and *the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land shall become burning pitch*, Isa. 34. 9.] and it is not like to be quenched, it grows the hotter by its own burning; when we consider this, were it not now wisdom to get something to bottom our selves upon against an evil time? It was the practice of the people of God. The Prophet *Habbakkuk*, is casting what he would do, *when the fig-tree should not blossom*, and all humane helps and comforts should fail; and he comes to this, *yet will I rejoyce in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation*, Hab. 3. 17, 18. It is good before an evil day to look out for a shelter, that we may not be alway tossed to and fro, live in a careful suspence, of which our Saviour warns us, *Luk.* 12. 29. μὴ μετεωρίζεσθε, *be not as Meteors in the ayr*, hovering up and down. It is that the Lord calls us to, *Isa.* 26. 20. *Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee, hide thy self as it were for a little moment, untill the indignation be overpast.* There was a storm coming, and what saith the Lord? *Come my people enter thou into thy chambers.* What are they? those refuges Gods people have in God and Christ in times of such distress. As after this life God hath variety of Mansions for his Saints, so he hath variety of refuges for his people in himself in this life. Now that shall be my endeavour to put your souls into some of these

chambers, because he hath said, *in quietness and peace shall be your rest.*

Grounds on faith in Christ as Gods fellow-worker.

I have endeavoured to look out for a rock to anchor upon against the storm overflow, and there is not a stronger stay that I desire my soul may fly unto, than this, *Jesus Christ is a co-worker with God the Father.* And I shall put all, I shall say, under these ten heads.

1. He dispenseth all Gods decrees.

1. Jesus Christ is the dispenser of all Gods decrees, of Election and Reprobation; all is put into his hands. God hath proportioned all his decrees in the prosecution of them to be under two Covenants, the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace, and both these are put into the hands of Christ to dispense: the Covenant of Works, because he was made under it; the Covenant of Grace, because he was Lord over it. There is a double Kingdom, which God hath over the creatures; an essential Kingdom, which was exercised before the fall. There is no act of the essential Kingdom exercised now, but all is administred in the mediatory Kingdom. In *Zach.* 6. 1. you read of *four chariots that came forth from between two mountains of brass.* What be the Chariots? four Monarchies, say some, raised against the Church: the Angels, say others, and that more probably, sent forth to avenge the Churches cause. And whence come these? from between two mountains of brass: it is an allusion to the custom of those Countries, they had places whence they had their Loose, the bars whence they began their race. Now you find in the first of *Ezekiel*, that Jesus Christ commands the Angels: they have their beginning of any work from the decrees of God, which are put into the hands of Christ. And that is the first ground to stay our Faith upon.

2. He governs the world for the Churches good.

2. The Government of all things thus committed to Christ, was undertaken by him for the Churches sake. Had the world stood under the government that was before the fall, as soon as man had sinned, the world had been destroyed: the threatning was, *in the day that thou eatest*, &c. But then did Christ come in; and you are bound to Christ, as well for the administration of the providential, as of the Spiritual Kingdom. *He is given to be head over all things to the Church*, Ephes. 1. 22. How comes it to pass, Christ hath an headship over

over all the creatures? might he not have redeemed his, and left the rest alone? It was for the Elects sake, that he might have a title to give you to all these, so that now, *all things are yours, because ye are Christs.* In *Zach.* 6. 11, 13. you read that *Joshua* the high Priest had Crowns set upon his head to make him a type of Christ; and it is said, *the counsel of peace shall be between them both,* that is, between the Kingdom and the Priesthood. Peace, that denotes all good, and the Counsel whence all good proceeds, comes from the Kingship of Christ, as well as the Priesthood of Christ. The government (he hath undertaken) both in the providential and spiritual Kingdom, is for the good and peace of his Church, as well as his Priesthood. What a comfort is this to all, that have an interest in Christ, to be able to say, Jesus Christ governs all, and all for my sake.

3. In Christs government, the Saints are all in his hand. So you find *Deut.* 33. 3. It is spoken of Jesus Christ the Law-giver, *all his Saints are in thy hand.* What is that? you know what Christ himself sayes, *No man shall pluck them out of my hand. My Father that gave them me is greater then all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand,* John 10. 19. his power is engaged for their protection. 3. The Saints are in his hand.

4. Jesus Christ is he, that acts all the causes of things in the world; the higher causes he acts, and therefore the inferiour causes much more. The great cause of all is, the Spirit of Christ, that doth all, as well in the providential, as in the Spiritual Kingdom, which is livelily represented in *Ezekiels* vision in that first chapter of *Ezekiel*, and in *Zach.* 6. 8. it is said of the black horses, that were sent forth into the North country, *these have quieted my spirit in the North country.* When judgement was executed on the enemies of the Church, the Spirit of Christ was pacified: and it is this Spirit that acts the Angels. Consider that place *Ezek.* 1. 13. it is said, that in *the midst of the living creatures, that is the Angels, there was an appearance of Lamps, it went up and down among the living creatures, and the fire was bright.* What is meant by that? the vigorous actings of the Spirit of Christ by a continual supply in all their administrations: so that not only the Saints, but the Angels have a continual supply from the 4. He acts all second causes.

the Spirit of Christ: and the same Spirit that acts the Angels, acts the spirits of men too; *Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit*, Zach. 4. 6. The deliverance of his people should be effected no by humane might nor power, but by the Spirit of Christ, acting men beyond their aymes and purposes. The Spirit of Christ is the great cause, that acts all inferiour causes.

5. There is an invisible vertue in all his administrations.

5. In all Christs administrations there is an invisible vertue that works, when men are in the dark, and understand not the wayes of God, nor can tell what he means, *Zach.* 1. 8. *I saw by night, and behold a man riding on a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom, and behind them were there speckled red and white horses.* The Church of God was in a great strait, and then doth the Lord Jesus appear for their help: but where is he? among the myrtle trees in the bottom, and behind him were horses, red, speckled, and white; help was prepared, but it lay in ambush. In *Ezekiels* vision, *the living creatures had hands under their wings, every one had four wings, and they had hands under their wings on the four sides*, Ezek. 1. 8. Many wings, and many hands; they were active in the work of the Lord, but their hands were hid. There is an invisible vertue in all Christs administrations, though we be in the dark, and do not see it.

6. He in them elevates the creatures beyond their intentions or mens expectations.

6. Jesus Christ in his administrations raiseth the creatures many times above their intentions, and beyond mens expectations. Consider those expressions, *Ezra.* 1. 5. *Then rose up the chief of the Fathers of* Judah *and* Benjamin, *and the Priests and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised to go up to build the house of the Lord.* And *Hag.* 1. 14. *The Lord stirred up the spirit of* Zerubbabel, *the son of* Shealtiel *governour of* Judah, *and the spirit of* Joshua *the son of* Josedech *the high Priest, and the spirit of all the people, and they came and did work in the house of the Lord.* Jesus Christ doth this. You would wonder how such things should be attempted and done. Jesus Christ stirreth up the spirits of men. Mark that in *Ezek.* 1. 19. *When the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up*: it is said in *ver.* 18. *the rings in the wheels were so high, that they were exceeding dreadful.*

dreadful. The living creatures they were the Angels, and the wheels were the inferiour causes, and when the wheels were lifted up from the earth, they were exceeding dreadful. When men look on the transactions of things here below, and see Jesus Christ raising up the wheels above the earth, so as they appear dreadful, then remember it is Jesus Christ lifts the wheels above the earth.

7. In times of judgement the Lord Jesus doth go before the instruments of vengeance, in *Ezek.* 9. 1. the Lord saith, *cause them that have charge over the City to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand.* God calls for the executioners to come to *Jerusalem*, and in the fifth verse, he commands them to fall to slaying, *let not your eye spare, neither have you pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children.* But Jesus Christ is described by his Priestly garments, *the man clothed in linnen, he comes among them, and he goes first through the midst of the City, through the midst of* Jerusalem, *and sets a mark on the foreheads of all the men that sigh and cry for the abominations of the land.* And the word to the executioners is, *Go after him through the City, and smite, but come not near any on whom is the mark.* When the bush is in the fire, as *Israel* was in *Egypt*, a bush worth nothing and hopeless, in the fire, yet you have *the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.* Jesus Christ goes before the executioners of vengeance to mark those that are his. 7. He marks his own for preservation in times of judgement.

8. Jesus Christ hath engaged himself for the deliverance of his people in the times of the greatest destruction. God bids his people in *Zion* not to *be afraid of the* Assyrian, *his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck; and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing*, Isa. 10. 27. *before the faces of anointing.* So the Hebrew. Some refer it to the Nation of the Jews: the yoke should be broken off, because of the anoynting that was upon them: but I take it to be principally meant of Jesus Christ, the anointed Saviour: because he is anointed for that end, he will therefore work deliverance for his people. Jesus Christ hath as many projects abroad for the protection of his people, as he hath for the destruction of his enemies. 8. He is engaged to deliver his people.

9. Jesus Christ delights to order things so, as that he will not 9. He appears when his Church is low.

not appear till his Church be brought very low, *Zach.* 12. 2. the Church of God is there compared to *a Cup*, and God sayes, *Behold I will make* Jerusalem *a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against* Judah *and* Jerusalem. The Church is not alway a cup, sometimes it is too great a draught for wicked men to swallow down at once. But when it is brought into a low estate, but to the quantity of a cup, and they fall to their draught, God then makes it a cup of trembling, or a cup of poison to them. *Cum duplicantur lateres venit Moses.* When *Israel* was brought under the forest bondage, and their oppressions doubled, then God sends *Moses* a deliverer. When his people are reduced to this, that there is *none to help, then the Lord Jesus himself comes from* Edom, *with his garments died in blood from* Bozrah, *travelling in the greatness of his strength: and he treads the wine-press alone*, Isa. 63. 1, 2, 3.

10. In the end of the world he will awake for his Church.

Lastly, In the end of the world, in an especial manner, the Lord Christ will awake for his Churches sake, and manifest himself to be in a peculiar manner the Protector of his people. Jesus Christ shall never have more, nor greater enemies then in the latter dayes: and those shall be the bittrest enemies, that pretend to be his greatest friends. The Toad is never so poysonous as it is in the wine-celler. Then will Jesus Christ shew himself, *then he will take to himself his great power and raign*, Rev. 11. 16, 17. the elders bless God for it, and say, *We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and raigned.* The enemies had all the power before in their hands, as if Christ had been weak, and unable to save: but now he takes to himself his great power (which he had laid aside in respect of the exercise of it) and raigns. When shall the Lord Jesus appear *clothed with a vesture dipt in blood, with his sharp sword to smite the Nations, having on his vesture, and on his thigh, that name written*, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS? *Rev.* 19. 13, 15, 16. It shall be, when his Church shall be brought to the lowest. Now thus exercise faith upon these grounds, and it will be a strong Cordial to you in the saddest times. Whatsoever your present fears and troubles are, *turn to your strong hold*,

hold, you that deſire to cloſe with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in truth, and can make out your intereſt in him: *ye that believe in God, believe alſo in Chriſt*; ſurely *he will be an hiding place from the wind, and a ſhelter from the ſtorm, he is the Lord Jehovah, the rock of ages*, truſt in him. Thoſe who are Magiſtrates, reſt on this Saviour; you have cauſe to bleſs God, that God is in Chriſt ruling the world, as well as reconciling the world. This is it that makes the government of the world ſweet to the Saints, becauſe it is in the hand of a Mediator; endeavour to uphold your ſpirits with theſe conſiderations. And ſo much for this glorious relation, wherein Jeſus Chriſt ſtands to God the Father. *He is the Man, Gods Fellow.*

20th Oct. 1676.

FINIS.

ΑΝΑΝΕΩΣΙΣ,

OR THE

TWO STICKS

MADE

ONE.

By that Reverend and faithful ſervant of Jeſus Chriſt, Mr. WILLIAM STRONG, ſometimes Preacher of the Goſpel at St. *Dunſtans* in the Weſt, *London*, and late Paſtor of the Church of Chriſt at *Weſtminſter*, and Preacher there.

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ΑΝΑΝΕΩΣΙΣ,
OR THE
TWO STICKS
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ONE.

Ezek. 37. 19.

Thus ſaith the Lord God, behold I will take the ſtick of Joſeph, *which is in the hand of* Ephraim, *and the tribes of* Iſrael *his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the ſtick of* Judah, *and make them one ſtick, and they ſhall be one in mine hand.*

EVery man now takes up the Prophet *Jeremies* complaint, *Jer.*4.19, 20. *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at my very heart, my heart maketh a noiſe in me, I cannot hold my peace, becauſe thou haſt heard, O my ſoul, the ſound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. Deſtruction upon deſtruction is cryed, for the whole land is ſpoiled: ſuddenly are my tents ſpoiled, and my curtains in a moment.* And well they may after near ſeven years experience of a bloody and waſting war. As in the body

body natural, health is the ſalt of all mercies: ſo in the body political, the ſalt of all mercies is Peace, without which all the reſt cannot be long preſerved, nor comfortably enjoyed. Have we not had experience, how the Law, the foundation of this State hath been perverted? the hedge of property, and wall of liberty taken down? the eſtates and lives of men ſubjected to the luſts of others? have not we ſeen ſtrange ſpiritual judgements poured out? mens luſts raging beyond what we could have imagined? many proving deſperate Apoſtates from their former profeſſion, and principles of their education? *Hazael*, though he looked on it, as that which would render him a dog, to do what the Prophet foretold him he would do. *I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of* Iſrael: *their ſtrong holds wilt thou ſet on fire, and their young men wilt thou ſlay with the ſword, and wilt daſh their children, and rip up their women with child.* What? ſaith *Hazael, is thy ſervant a dog, that he ſhould do this great thing?* 2 King. 8. 12, 13. yet ſuch a dog was *Hazael*. Such are the miſeries of war, eſpecially of a civil war, none ſo bloody, none ſo bootleſs. It is ſo threatned, *Iſa.* 9. 19, 20. *No man ſhall ſpare his brother, and he ſhall ſnatch on the right hand and be hungry, and ſhall eat on the left hand and not be ſatisfied. Every man ſhall eat the fleſh of his own arm:* Manaſſeh Ephraim, *and* Ephraim Manaſſeh: *and they together ſhall be againſt* Judah. No wonder then that men cry out, oh! would they did it with *Jeremy* his ſpirit: or as *Joab* ſaid to *Abner*, *Shall the ſword devour for ever? knoweſt thou not that it will be bitterneſs in the end? how long will it be ere thou call back the people from following their brethren?* 2 Sa. 2. 26. Now to ſecond all ſuch holy deſires is my ſcope in the choyce of this portion of Scripture to treat of: yet with a deſire, as to joyn with you in ſeeking peace, ſo to direct you in a way of peace. The Preachers of the Goſpel are Gods Trumpets, and the Trumpets of God were to be hearkned unto not only in time of war, but in time of peace too, *Numb.* 10. 2.

There are two things obſervable in this Chapter, which God promiſeth to his people. *When wrath came on the Jews to the utmoſt*, there befell them theſe two evils, diviſion and deſolation; and one makes way for the other: and here God

God promiſeth to cure them both: and theſe two promiſes are the ſubſtance of the whole Chapter.

The firſt thing promiſed, is, a redemption and reſtitution of them to a civil and Church-ſtate. When they came out of *Egypt*, and God called them into a civil and Church-ſtate, this is called their *birth and their nativity*. When the Lord calls them *Loammi, ye are not my people*, Hoſ. 1. 9. This is called their death; and when they were reſtored to a civil and Church-ſtate again, this was their *reſtitution*. And becauſe their fleſh was not only waſted, but their bones dry, they are reſembled under this type of a valley of dry bones, for they ſay in *ver.* 11. *Our bones are dryed, and our hope is loſt: we are cut off for our parts.* And then, God ſaith, *Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cauſe you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of* Iſrael, *ver.* 12.

But then the ſecond thing obſervable, is; When God had given them a Redemption and Reſtitution, he promiſeth them a Re-union. Whereas in the dayes of *Reboboam*, there began a civil diviſion, and the ten tribes made choice of *Jeroboam*, and this Civil diviſion brought in an Eccleſiaſtical, they that could not remain one State, could not remain one Church; as they had ſet up a King, ſo he provides them a God: he ſets up the Calves at *Bethel*. Here was a State divided, and a Church divided. Now when God returns to them, he ſaith, he will put both theſe together, and they ſhall become one. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, Behold I will take the ſtick of* Joſeph, *which is in the hand of* Ephraim, *and the Tribes of* Iſrael *his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the ſtick of* Judah, *and make them one ſtick, and they ſhall be one in my hand.*

There are four principal obſervations in the words.

Firſt, in that theſe people had been ſo long divided, and ſo greatly divided, and yet God promiſeth to re-unite them: it teacheth us this, *Let diviſions among brethren be heightned by never ſo great violence and long continuance, yet God can, and none but God can re-unite them.* 1. *Doct.* 1.

Here is State-diviſion, and Church-diviſion exceedingly heightned by acts of violence and long continuance, yet God ſaith, I will put them together and they ſhall become one; if he put the two ſticks together, they ſhall become one.

Doct. 2. Secondly, *The reconciliation of brethren thus among themselves, is a fruit of their reconciliation with the Lord.*

God saith presently after, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people, and my servant* David *shall be their King:* and I will take the two sticks, and they shall be one in my hand.

Doct. 3. Thirdly, *Whensoever the Lord thus reconciles brethren, it is an act of special mercy.*

So it is promised here. *Behold saith the Lord, I will do it.* When the Lord, after all these violences and heightnings of division, shall bring brethren to unite again, it cannot but be an act of special mercy.

Doct. 4. Fourthly, *God doth not use to make up such great breaches among brethren, till both parties be brought very low.*

When they are both dry bones, and when they say, our bones are dried, our hope is past; then God saith, I will open your graves, and then the two sticks shall become one in my hand.

To begin with the first, here be two sticks, and these the Lord saith shall become one in his hand by his power.

Doct. 1. Divisions among brethren, though heightned by never so much violence and long continuance, God, and God only can heal.

There be these three things to be spoken to in the explication of the doctrine.

1. To what height differences among brethren may come.

2. That it is Gods work only to make up these.

3. What way it is that God doth this, and what kind of union between brethren thus divided, God (as the Scripture holds forth) doth use to make.

To what height divisions between brethren may grow; in eight particulars.

For the first, let us see the disease, that we may the better be able to judge of the cure. Surely one would think the spirits of brethren cannot be much exasperated that were so near yesterday, that are bound by so many bonds; let us see to what degrees these differences may grow: and that you may observe in these particulars.

1. First, No bonds of nature or obligations of this kind will hold us. Sin, that hath broken all obligations to God, no wonder if it break all bonds to men; *the son dishonouring the Father,*

Father, the daughter rising up against the Mother, the daughter in law against the Mother in law, and a mans enemies being the men of his own house, Mic. 7. 6. Ephraim *against* Manasseh, *and* Manasseh *against* Ephraim, *and both together against* Judah, *Isa.* 9. 21. Of all the Tribes, one would have thought *Manasseh* and *Ephraim* should never have fallen out, they were not only the Grand-sons of *Jacob*, and taken by him to be his own, as *Reuben* and *Simeon*, Gen. 48. 5. but the sons, and the only sons of *Joseph*: the rest of the Tribes sprang from several Mothers, these were the sons God had given *Joseph* in the land of his affliction. Yet these are one against another: no bonds of nature will hold us, no not brethren in the neerest relation.

Suppose beside the tye of nature God stamp an authority upon one above the other, that will not hold neither. Both *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* are against *Judah*, Isa. 9. 21. *Judah* was the kingly Tribe, on which the Lord had fastned the Scepter. *Judah* of whom the Messiah was to come, yet both together against *Judah*. Bonds of nature, impressions of authority will not hold. Let *Moses* lay out and lay down his life for a murmuring people, yet in all discontents you hear nothing but, stone *Moses*. Let *Samuel* rule with God, and when he comes to lay down his place, be able to say, *Whose Ox have I taken? or whose Ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith?* 1 Sam. 12. 3. Yet if there be any miscarriage in son or in servant, nothing will serve, but lay *Samuel* aside. 2.

Tyes of grace will not do, and yet there is no tye like that of grace, because it is the bond of one Spirit. Let *Lot* and *Abraham* be at difference, and they must part; the land is not able to bear them, that they might dwell together, *Gen.* 13. 6. Let those that joyned together when they came out from Antichristianism, and stand together on *the sea of glass mingled with fire*, differ but in judgement about lesser matters, and it soon makes a breach in their affections; it may be rather wished, then hoped, that while there are differences in judgements, there might not be differences in affections. 3.

4. Even among brethren, they may grow up to ſuch a jealouſie one of another, that they may not think well of what is ſaid or done one by another. Let *Moſes* bring the people out of *Egypt*, and the hand of God be glorioufly ſeen in it; yet when they come into the wilderneſs, if God honour *Moſes* above the reſt, *Aaron* and *Miriam* his brother and ſiſter ſpeak againſt him, *Num.* 12. 2. it is the ordinary plague that follows civil diviſions; though both parties deſire agreement, yet they look on one another with ſuch jealouſie, that it is hard for them to truſt one another. *Moſes* was ſuſpected to carry away all the honour. *Hath the Lord indeed ſpoken by* Moſes *only? hath he not ſpoken alſo by us?*

5. Theſe differences among brethren may grow to ſuch an height, as they may not know how to live together, or how to act together. *Paul* and *Barnabas*, brethren in perſecution for the Goſpel, when a difference ariſeth between them, but about a companion to go with them both, it grows to that height, and the contention is ſo ſharp, that *they depart aſunder one from the other*, Acts 15. 38, 39. *Epiphanius* hath a ſtory of *Miletus* and *Peter* Biſhop of *Alexandria*, who were both committed to priſon becauſe they were Chriſtians, both *Martyres deſignati*, deſtined to Martyrdom, and were ſet to dig in the Mines together: yet there aroſe ſome difference between them concerning the lapſed Angels, which grew ſo great, that when they were in priſon together, they made a partition between them: they could not joyn together in the worſhip of Chriſt, for which they both ſuffered.

6. Theſe differences between brethren may riſe to that height, that they may plot and deſign one anothers deſtruction, and rejoyce in it. The Patriarchs were godly men, yet you know their plot againſt *Joſeph*, they conſpire againſt him to ſlay him, *Gen.* 37. 18. Nay our Saviour in *Matth.* 10. 21. tells you, *the brother ſhall deliver up or betray the brother to death, and the Father the child: and the children riſe up againſt the Parents, and cauſe them to be put to death*, deſign their deſtruction and rejoyce in it. When the witneſſes are ſlain, *their brethren that dwell in the ſame ſtreet may rejoyce*, Rev. 11.

7. They may come to that height, that the one may joyn with the wickedeſt men in the world againſt the other, that ſhould be

be neareſt and deareſt to them. Thus in *Iſa.* 7. 5. Iſrael *joyns with* Syria, *and takes evil counſel, ſaying, let us go up againſt* Judah *to vex it*, &c. *Iſrael* will joyn with Heathens, ſometimes with *Syria*, and ſometimes with *Aſſur* againſt *Judah*, *Come let us make a breach for us therein, and ſet a King in the midſt of it, even the ſon of* Tabeal, *ver.* 6. rather ſet up any man as King there, then any of the houſe of *David*.

Let us come to prove that, that yet God, and God only can heal the diviſions among brethren: and this we ſhall do, God, and God only can heal theſe diviſions, Proved by Scripture.

Firſt by Scripture, and I ſhall reduce all that I ſhall ſay from thence to four heads.

1. I ſhall give you ſome proofes *ab attributo*, becauſe this is a thing God in Scripture challengeth as an Attribute belonging to himſelf, he is called *the God of Glory*, *the Father of Mercy*, *and God of all grace*; becauſe, *viâ eminentiæ*, he is ſo by way of eminence, all glory, and mercy, and grace flow from him. So he is called *Deus Pacis*, *the God of Peace*, Heb. 13. 20. All Peace comes from him: it is an Attribute he takes to himſelf. And in *Iſa.* 45. 7. he tells you, *I make peace and create evil.* How doth he clear it, that he is the God of Peace? that that is his Attribute? why he doth it thus. *I make Peace. I the Lord do all theſe things.* None elſe can do it but he, and he can do it, for it is an Attribute peculiar to him. 1. God challengeth it.

2. *A promiſſo*, from the promiſe; God hath undertaken it. Look into *Iſa.* 57. 19. *I create the fruit of the lips, peace, peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near*, ſaith the Lord. Then Peace is a created thing, and God creates it out of nothing: then God can do it: yea but none but God can do it. It is Gods gift, *In this place will I give peace, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts*, Hag. 2. 9. Nay the Lord ſaith, *I will extend peace to you as a river*, Iſa. 66. 12. Peace like a river, what is that? why? as *the enemy ſhall come in as a flood* that carries away all before it, it ſhall be an overflowing ſcourge bearing down all that is in the way: ſo ſaith God, I will extend to her Peace as a river that ſhall throw down all oppoſition. God, and God only can do it, he hath promiſed it. 2. He hath promiſed it.

3. *Ab exemplo*, there be many examples in Scripture, that God hath made up great breaches between brethren, which none 3. He hath done it.

none elſe could. What a mighty breach was that between the houſe of *David*, and the houſe of *Saul*? and what acts of hoſtility were there for a long time between them? yet in *Davids* time it was made up in a great meaſure, but 1 *Chron.* 22. 9. God promiſeth *David, a ſon ſhall be born of thee, who ſhall be a man of reſt, and I will give him reſt from all his enemies round about, for his name ſhall be* Solomon, *and I will give peace and quietneſs to* Iſrael *in his dayes.* In *Solomons* time the breach was perfectly cured. Was there ever a greater breach then there was between the Jew and the Gentile? were ever any more divided then they? yet God ſaith, I will make them both one, and ſo Chriſt hath done it. *Eph.* 2. 14. *He is our peace, who hath made of both one, and hath broken down the middle Wall of partition between us.*

4. He only can make war.

4. We may gather this *à contrario*. God only can make war, and therefore God only can make peace. He only can make war. *God ſent an evil ſpirit between* Abimelech *and the men of* Shechem, *Judg.* 9. 23. There was a ſpirit of diviſion between them: whence comes it? from the Lord. There was a Rent among the Tribes, whence was it? the cauſe was from the Lord, 1 *King.* 12. 15. and *I have taken away my peace from this people ſaith the Lord*, Jer. 16. 5. And in *Zach.* 11. you read of the *ſtaffe of bonds*, by which the people were united, and God breaks it, that he might break the brotherhood between *Judah* and *Iſrael*, ver. 14. You ſee the proof of the point by Scripture. We now come to ſhew ſome grounds, why it is ſo, that God, and only God can make up ſuch breaches between brethren. And firſt,

Proved by Reaſons.

Reaſ. 1. It is an act of his Sovereignty.

To make Peace is an act of Soveraignty, as well as to make war. God only is the King of all the earth. Civilians ſay, the making of peace and war belongs to the Supream Power. God is the moſt Supream, and ſo it belongs unto him alone. Obſerve that in *Rev.* 6. 4. there was a red horſe comes forth, and he that rode on it had a ſword given him, there was an inſtrument of vengeance that was given him, he did not take it, *and power was given to him to take peace from the earth*: he could not take peace from the earth untill the Lord had given him power. And therefore the Prophet ſpeaks to the ſword, *Jer.* 47. 6, 7. *O thou ſword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou*

thou be quiet? put up thy ſelf into thy ſcabberd, reſt and be ſtill. It is a glorious Apoſtrophe; The ſword anſwers. *How can it be quiet, ſeeing the Lord hath given it a charge againſt* Askelon *and the Sea-ſhore? there hath he appointed it. The ſword is bathed in heaven.* Then it is an act of Soveraignty to make War, and ſo it is to make Peace, and both appertain to Gods Soveraignty. Wars in Scripture are expreſſed by winds. *Daniel* ſees in his Viſion *the four winds contending on the great Sea*, Dan. 7. 2. The world is reſembled to the Sea. As when God ſpeaks of *Babylon*, Jer. 51. 1. *I will raiſe up againſt* Babylon *a deſtroying wind*: that is, a mighty enemy. Troubles and combuſtions in the world are compared to winds. Now who commands the winds? doth not *God bring the winds out of his treaſury*? when the winds blow, can men command them? War is an act of Soveraignty, hence the Lord calls it, *the rod of my ſon*, Ezek. 21. 9, 10. That is the firſt reaſon, to make peace as well as to make war is an act of Soveraignty, therefore God, and God only can do it.

Reaſ. 2. He only can act Inſtruments.

Though we are able to look no further then to the outſide of things, and we ſee none but fleſhly inſtruments in making war and peace, yet there be others imployed. God makes uſe of Angels in all wars, he makes uſe of good Angels. The Angel comes to *Daniel* to ſhew him *what was noted in the Scripture of truth*, Dan. 10. 21. and he tells him whence he was diverted. *I return ſaith he to fight with the King of* Perſia. *Alexander* comes with a great Army to fight againſt the King of *Perſia*: whence comes this? the Angel tells him, *when I am gone forth the Prince of* Grecia *ſhall come*: the Angel goes out firſt, and then the *Grecian* army comes: and he makes uſe of evil Angels too. Who calls out *Ahab* to the war of *Ramoth Gilead*? *a lying ſpirit*, 1 Kings 22. 22. God imployes an evil Angel, an evil ſpirit between *Abimelech* and the men of *Shechem*. And who ſhall cauſe the Angel to put up his ſword? who *ſhall cauſe the unclean ſpirit to paſs out of the land*? *it is the ſpirit of the living creatures which is in the wheels*, Ezek. 1. 21.

Reaſ. 3. He only can over-rule the hearts of men.

God only can over-rule the hearts of men, therefore God, and none but God can reconcile ſuch differences between brethren. It is ſaid *Pſal.* 33. 15. *He faſhioneth mens hearts alike.*

alike. The hearts of men are caſt into ſeveral faſhions. It is God that faſhions them, he caſts them into a mould. You do not give your own hearts your own faſhion. God faſhions their hearts; the meaning is, he forms their conſultations and affections, he orders their counſels, he compoſeth their affections, and makes them alike.

1. He faſhions their conſultations.

1. God faſhions the conſultations of men; unleſs God make them counſels of peace they will not be ſo. *Behold the man whoſe name is the Branch,* &c. *he ſhall build the Temple of the Lord, he ſhall bear the glory, he ſhall ſit and rule upon his Throne, and he ſhall be a Prieſt upon his Throne,* Zach. 6. 12, 13. God puts the Government into the hand of a Prieſt and King; What? two Suns in one firmament? yea ſaith God, *the counſel of peace ſhall be between them both.* You may plot and contrive this way and that way, but unleſs God make them counſels of Peace, they will never be ſo. It is God that faſhions the conſultations of men.

2. Their affections.

2. God faſhions their affections too. *He turned their hearts to hate his people,* ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 105. 25. and it is he that turns the hearts *of the ten Kings to hate the whore,* Rev. 17. 16. Let there be never ſo intimate affections, and never ſo peaceable counſels, unleſs God faſhion them ſo, they ſhall not prove ſo. Was there ever more peaceable counſel, then that which the old men gave to *Rehoboam*? yet it was not a counſel of peace. God did not ſet it on: the King hearkned not to it, the cauſe was from the Lord, 1 *Kings* 12. 7, 8, 15. God only can over-rule the hearts of men, therefore he, and he only can make up ſuch wide breaches between brethren.

Reaſ. 4. Wars depend on his decree.

There is not a war in the world, but it doth depend on an infallible decree: do you think the Inſtruments of Vengeance go forth at their pleaſure? you read of four chariots with ſeveral coloured horſes in them, that were ſent forth into the earth, *Zach.* 6. 1, 2, &c. *And they come forth between two Mountains, and the Mountains were Mountains of braſs. Decreta firma & rata judicia,* is *Druſius* note upon the place: by theſe Mountains of braſs are meant, *the unchangeable decrees of God*; the devices of men may turn this way and that way, and they may be able by their plots to heighten their plagues,

plagues, but not to end them, as the Egyptian Magicians could by their inchantments. Gods decrees are as Mountains of braſs. Look into all ſtories, and you ſhall find men that have endeavoured to make up peace by their own wiſdom and policy, and have not taken in God, they have but put a new piece of cloth into an old garment, which hath made the rent greater. In *Dan.* 2.43. There was a diviſion in the Roman State, and how was it cemented? how did they endeavour to knit the Iron and the Clay? they ſhall *mingle themſelves* (ſaith the text) *with the ſeed of men.* Here comes in a policy: theſe two muſt be put together with the ſeed of a man. To make up their breach they betook themſelves to marriages, there muſt be matches into one family, and into another, but all this would not joyn them, *they ſhall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.* So in *Dan.* 8.25. *Antiochus* a politick Prince, he through his policy made craft to proſper in his hand, and made offers of peace, and by it deſtroyed many, *but he is broken without hands.* It is a remarkable inſtance that of *Luther*, when the differences firſt began between him and *Rome*, if they would but have taken away indulgences and pardons, he would have ſate down, as himſelf profeſſeth. But they took their own way, ſent out Bulls againſt *Luther*, and purſue the Duke of *Saxony* for countenancing him, which raiſed *Luthers* ſpirit to ſuch an height againſt Popery, that he ſayes, *brevi efficiam ut anathema ſit eſſe Papiſtam*, ere long ſaith he, I will bring it about, that it ſhall be accounted a curſed thing to be a Papiſt. You will but in vain attempt peace by your policy, if God make it not. The inſtruments of Vengeance come forth from between two mountains of braſs. It is God and God only, can make up breaches between brethren upon theſe grounds.

Now thirdly, what way doth God uſe to take to effect this, and what union doth he uſe to make between brethren thus greatly divided? and what are the ingredients he uſeth to put into it? What union God makes between brethren divided.

There are ten Ingredients God doth uſe to mix with the peace he doth make for his people, when he unites them.

1. When God makes peace for a people, it is peace with truth. 1. It is peace with truth.

truth. It is that *Hezekiah* bleſſeth God for: he joyneth both together, 2 *King.* 20. 19. *Is it not good if peace and truth be in my dayes?* It was that *Mordecai*, when he was advanced wrote to his brethren, *Heſt.* 9. 30. *He wrote letters to all the Jews with words of peace and truth.* It is that God promiſeth, *I will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth*, Jer. 33. 6. That which God bids you to love and ſeek, *Zach.* 8. 19. *Love the truth and peace.* Now I would conſider theſe two firſt in conjunction, and then in ſubordination. Truth muſt have the firſt place.

I. In conjunction.

Firſt, in conjunction, truth and peace muſt be ſought together: the wiſdom from beneath will be ready to divide them: but *the wiſdom that is from above is firſt pure, then peaceable*, Jam. 3. 17. The Apoſtle hath this exhortation, *ſpeaking the truth in love*, Epheſ. 4. 15. ἀληθεύοντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ, *truthing it in love.* There is a double evil in men in this reſpect: on the one hand carnal men cry out for peace altogether, and ſay the former times were better; becauſe though we had leſs truth, we had more peace. So deſire peace, as that you deſire truth with it, elſe your deſire is ſinful. God hath ſo ordered it, that he doth not reveal all truths at once. *Heb.* 1. 1. πολυμέρως καὶ πολυτρόπως. *At ſundry times*, as well as *in diverſe manners God ſpeaks unto his people.* He doth ſeldom reveal great truths, but they are received with much reluctance, to diſcover thoſe that love truth. It is a great error in this reſpect, to purſue peace and neglect truth. *Bernard* obſerves, there is a fourfold ſtate or temper of conſcience, *bona & tranquilla, bona & perturbata, mala & tranquilla, & mala & perturbata*, the worſt of all is an evil conſcience that is quiet: ſo an evil and quiet Commonwealth is the worſt Commonwealth.

On the other hand, others there be that ſeek truth, but not peace. Truth, that is, ſome truths: but with ſo much eagerneſs and violence, with ſo much pride and impoſing upon their brethren, as no peace is to be had without it. So that as to peace with truth, we may ſay as *Crangius* an old Monk did to *Luther*; He liked *Luthers* doctrine of Free-grace and Juſtification by faith well, but he ſaw there was ſo much oppoſition like to be made againſt it, that he ſaid to *Luther*;

Luther; *Go my brother into your cell, it is more to be wished then hoped.* But if God work peace, it will be peace with truth. Seek it in conjunction.

Secondly, Seek it in subordination. First truth, and then peace. Peace is a good second. The Scripture gives us a warrant to hazard peace for truth, and for truths sake to break peace; in the third verse of *Judes* Epistle, *Contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints*: *and* Paul *withstood* Peter *to the face*, when he did not walk uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel, *Gal.* 2. 11. Here lyes the baseness of many mens spirits, they must have peace on any terms, though it be with the hazard of truth, and the loss of it too. Of truth in doctrine; it was the sin of the ten Kings in the Revelations: Antichrist had made a great party, and they saw all the world wandred after the beast, and say, who can make war with the beast? and so they give their power and strength to the beast. And so for truth in worship. Here was the baseness of *Ahaz*, he goes down to *Damascus* and sees a new fashioned Altar there, & to collogue with an Idolatrous Colleague, he sends the fashion of the Altar and the pattern of it, and he must have the like set up at *Jerusalem*, 2 Kings 16. 10. But if it be a peace that God makes, we may be sure it shall be peace with truth; peace and truth in conjunction, and peace in subordination to truth, both in doctrine and worship.

2. In subordination.

2. The peace which God makes, is peace with holiness. You see these coupled together, *Heb.* 12. 14. *Follow peace with all men, and holiness.* So in the Angels song, *Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace*, Luke 2. 14. Peace, so as God be glorified, and *the unity of the spirit kept in the bond of peace*, Eph. 4. 3. and that Spirit is an holy Spirit. Whence do all the differences in the world arise? from Satan. When he was once ὁ πονηρὸς, he became ὁ ἐχθρὸς, when he became the evil one, he became the envious one. *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?* Jam. 4. 4. Unholiness brought in all unquietness. The Hebrews call a wicked man רשע an unquiet man. A wicked man is so; in *Isa.* 57. 20. He is compared to a raging sea, *the wicked is like the troubled sea, when it cannot*

2. It is peace with holiness.

rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. It is not only unquiet with winds from without, but turbulent in it self; so are wicked men. If there were but two men in the world, having not a principle of holiness within them, they would never agree. Men may think upon politick principles to unite all interests, to mix light and darkness, to unite the godly with drunkards, prophane persons, swearers, Atheists. A flattery there may be, a peace there can never be. There will be an antipathy, and the righteous will still be an abomination to the wicked. It is an enmity that God hath set, *Gen.* 3. 15. *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.* It will be with wicked men toward the godly, as it is with the Panther, who hath such a deadly hatred to man, that he flyes at, and tears his picture where-ever he sees it. The way to be reconciled, is to become holy. It was a good rule of *Constantine*; *I can never think* (saith he) *that that man will be true and faithful to me, that is not constant to his God.* And memorable is that saying of *Augustine* touching his old friends, after their conversion: They were my friends before, but much more now [*sanguine Christi conglutinati,*] we being glued together by the blood of Christ. Never seek friendship with a prophane man. Flatter me he may, love me he cannot; and I should look on him as the most dangerous enemy when he flatters. The people of God are in danger as well as their Saviour, to be betrayed with a kiss. That is the next ingredient: the peace which God makes, is peace with holiness.

3. It is peace with righteousness.

3. The peace which God makes, is peace with righteousness, peace with Justice. These are joyned together in Gods peace, *Jam.* 3. 18. *The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.* It is said of Christ, in his dayes there should *be abundance of peace, and righteousness*, Psalm 85. 10. *Righteousness and peace shall kiss each other. And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever*, Isa. 32. 17. It is a notable Scripture that in *Psal.* 72. 3. it is spoken of the Government of Christ under *Solomon* as a Type. *The mountains shall bring forth peace, and the little hills by righteousness:* the Mountains, some expound that all parts of the Kingdoms. Mountains

tains and hills are barren places. Others expound it by that, *Mic.* 6. 2. *Hear Oye Mountains the Lords controverſie*: that is, ye great men who are exalted above others as high Mountains, and little hills, that is men of lower degree and authority. Now ſaith the text, *the Mountains and the little hills too ſhall bring forth peace.* But how? it ſhall be *by righteouſneſs.* God in Scripture preſcribes no way of peace, but in a way of Juſtice: and Chriſt is in his outward government, as he is in his inward, *firſt King of righteouſneſs, and then King of peace.* Peace ſhould begin, where it did end. *Ubi deficit judicium, ibi incipit bellum.* Where Juſtice ends, war begins. And they that firſt break the rule of righteouſneſs, they firſt levy war. And however men may be ſubdued, and a ſtrict hand kept over them, yet know, whoever you be that ſit at the ſtern: no further then righteouſneſs, no further peace. Knit what knots you will upon the people, it will be with them but as *Alexander* dealt with the *Gordian* knot, if the fingers cannot untie them, the ſword ſhall cut them in pieces. The *Pharſalii* ſent Embaſſadours to *Rome* to make peace, and being asked, what peace they would have? anſwered, *ſi bonam perfectam, ſi malam haud diuturnam.* If you grant us a good peace, we ſhall ever keep it; if it be a bad peace, peace on hard terms, it will not laſt long; ſeek peace then with Juſtice. You have an excellent expreſſion, *Ezek.* 45. 8. When God makes up peace with his people, he ſaith, *My Princes ſhall no more oppreſs my people.* And that is the promiſe too, *Iſa.* 60 17. *I will alſo make thy officers peace, and thy exactors righteouſneſs.* Therefore all you that deſire peace, an unjuſt peace, a peace without righteouſneſs. Peace, but ſo, that ſome may be enriched, and ſome impoveriſhed. Remember that is not Gods peace.

4. It muſt be a hearty peace. If God make peace for a people, it ſhall not be a peace from the lips only. God will heal the breach and cure the wound at bottom. It refers to the ſame time of that propheſie, *I will give them one heart*, Jer. 32. 39. How ſhall the two ſticks be made one? why, ſaith God, I will give them one heart: and that was the peace promiſed, *Iſa.* 11. 13. *The envy of* Ephraim *ſhall depart*, Ephraim *ſhall not envy* Judah, *nor* Judah *envy* Ephraim. God will change

4. It is a ſincere peace.

their ſpirits. Take heed of dawbing with untempered morter, it will not hold. You read in *Heſ.* 10. 2. *Their heart is divided, diviſum eſt cor eorum,* or it may be read *diviſit cor eorum.* He hath divided their heart. And what follows? *now thou ſhalt be found faulty, therefore thou ſhalt be made deſolate.* What is the great forerunner of deſolation? heart-diviſion. No ſuch ſad preſage of deſtruction to this Nation, as this. Conſider that expreſſion, *Judg.* 5. 15. *For the diviſions of* Reuben *there were ſad thoughts of heart:* here was a publick ſervice to be done, a publick enemy to be reſiſted. *Reuben* withdrew the politick Princes; but there was a grudge remained, for the diviſions of *Reuben* there were great ſearchings of heart: is it not ſo with us? and unleſs God compoſe it, there will be a continuation of revenge from poſterity to poſterity, and you may leave it as an inheritance to your children; but when God comes he cauſeth it to ceaſe. *Plutarch* hath a ſtory of *Hamilcar*, that having two ſons, he left that as a legacy to them, never to make peace with the Romans. And this will be the way of revenge between men and men, unleſs God change the ſpirits of men, and make them one. This muſt be the peace you ſhould ſeek, to have your hearts cured; your ſpirits of jealouſie, evil ſurmizings, ſpirits of revenge, theſe muſt be healed: and that is the peace that God makes, and he only can make it.

5. It is peace under which the righteous may flouriſh.

5. The peace that God makes for a people, is a peace under which the righteous flouriſh. You have that expreſſion, *Pſal.* 72. 7. It is ſpoken of the Kingdom of Chriſt under the raign of *Solomon*, as a Type of Chriſt, *in his dayes ſhall the righteous flouriſh, and abundance of peace:* and for whom ſhould peace be ordained but for them? their Covenant is a Covenant of peace, and they are called *ſons of peace.* When Chriſt dyed, he left them the legacy of peace; and when they dye they enter into peace. Look into *Iſa.* 6. 13. You ſhall ſee there, whence all your future hopes muſt ſpring. There is a Nation God had made deſolate, like a tree that hath caſt his leaves, yet God ſaith it ſhall ſprout and flouriſh again. What was the ground of it? *the holy ſeed that is in it ſhall be the ſubſtance thereof:* ſhall not they then be conſidered in it? In *Rev.* 16. 13. you read of *three unclean ſpirits like frogs that come out of the mouth*

mouth of the Dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false Prophet. What are these? Some emissaries the devil and Antichrist send abroad. Whither? To the Kings and great men of the earth. What is their business? To gather them together to the battle of *Armageddon.* So the text saith, *They go forth to the Kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty*, ver. 14. There be emissaries gone forth to unite the Churches enemies. Far be it to say, Gods peace is such a peace. 'No, it is such a peace under which the righ-'teous shall flourish. They are concerned, and must be con-'sidered in it. If you make up a peace, that vile persons shall 'be exalted, some preferred, and some revenged: this is not 'Gods peace. Wicked men walk on every side, when vile 'persons are exalted.'

6. The peace which God makes, is a peace with keeping your Covenant. God doth use to send abroad his sword, and the cause of it is, *to avenge the quarrel of his Covenant*, Lev. 26. 25. You that have entred into a solemn engagement, with your hands lifted up to heaven, look to this. Men pretend much to the Covenant. Keeping the Covenant, is not to take it apart, what will serve your turn, but in all wherein thou hast bound thy self. Not only to quote it against Heresie and Schism, as some; or against apostatizing to the contrary part, as others: but making conscience of all. I could instance in sad examples of Gods judgements on Covenant-breaking. *Uladislaus* entred into Covenant with *Amurath* the Turk, and by perswasion of *Julian* a Jesuite, when he thought he had an advantage, he breaks it: whereupon a bloody field was fought between them. The Turk seeing his men fly and fall, and that he was like to be put to the worst: he plucked out of his bosom, the writing signed by *Uladislaus*, and holding it up to heaven, said, *Thou Christ, if thou be a God, as the Christians say thou art, avenge thy self for this perfidious breach of Covenant on this servant of thine, who hath sworn it in thy name.* Thereupon the battle turned, *Uladislaus* was slain, and his whole Army routed.

6. It is peace with keeping Covenant.

7. If it be Gods peace, it will be a fruit of the teaching and government of Christ. So *Isa.* 54. 13. *Thy children shall*

7. It is such a peace, as is the fruit of the teaching and government of Christ.

ſhall be all taught of the Lord, and great ſhall be the peace of thy children. Underſtand peace after the manner of the Hebrews, for all manner of proſperity; and this peace is included in it. And *Iſa.* 9.7. *Of the increaſe of his government and peace, there ſhall be no end.* Now to clear this a little. The teaching of Chriſt, or Gods teaching, hath two things in it.

Chriſts teaching implies

1. A glorious light irradiating the underſtanding, *writing the Law in the heart*, diſcovering that to it, which the carnal heart cannot ſee. You have the text quoted, *John* 6. 45. *It is written in the Prophets, and they ſhall be all taught of God. Every one therefore* (mark it) *who hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh to me.*

1. An inlightning of the underſtanding

2. The inclining, ſubduing and determining the will to thoſe things diſcovered, *præbendo vires efficaciſſimas voluntatis*, as *Auguſtine* ſpeaks. Working the ſtrength of the will, to embrace the truths of Chriſt, and to ſubmit to the guidance, and yoke of Chriſt. Now if you make a peace, wherein you have neither Chriſt teaching, nor Chriſt ruling, it will not be Gods peace.

2. Inclining, ſubduing, and determining the will.

8. If it be Gods peace, the foundation of it muſt be laid, in taking away every curſed thing. God doth uſe to lay the foundation of true peace, in exemplary Juſtice on the Achans of his people. God ſends a ſword among people to reach them, whom the ſword of the Magiſtrate doth not reach. *Jehu* well obſerved, *There could be no peace, ſo long as the whoredoms of* Jezebel, *and her witchcrafts are ſo many*, 2 Kin. 9. 22. This hath been Gods way. He tells *David*, he would give him a ſon, and his name ſhall be called *Solomon*, and I will give peace and quietneſs to *Iſrael* in his dayes. How muſt that peace be founded? when *David* gave his charge to *Solomon* upon his entrance into his raign, *Thou knoweſt*, ſaith he, *what* Joab *the ſon of* Zerviah *did unto me, let not his hoary head go down to the grave in peace. And thou knoweſt what* Shimei *did to me, how he curſed me with a grievous curſe, hold him not guiltleſs*, 1 Kings 2. 5, 8. It was the way, that God directed *Joſhua* for removing the preſent plague; they fell before their enemies, *Joſhua* falls upon his face; *Up, ſaith God, why lyeſt thou upon thy face?* Iſrael *hath ſinned:* there was an Achan. The way to eſtabliſh *Iſraels* peace, was to remove

8. It is ſuch a peace as muſt be laid, in taking away every accurſed thing.

move the accurſed thing. It may be not the leaſt cauſe, why God threatens new troubles, becauſe God did not incline thoſe, in whoſe power it was to execute judgement on them, that were the cauſe of theſe troubles. *Behold theſe that go forth to the North country, have quieted my ſpirit in the North country*, Zeph. 6. 8. In the beginning of the Chapter, you have mention of four chariots that go forth to execute vengeance againſt *Perſia*, and when they had done ſo, they have pacified my ſpirit, ſaith God.

9. If it be a peace of Gods making, it ſhall be ſuch a peace, as ſhall bear down all oppoſition. *I will extend peace to her as a river*, or *fluvium pacis*. I will extend to her a river of peace, *Iſa.* 66. 12. Peace, that ſhall bear down all oppoſition. Would you know when God makes a war, or when he intends to do it? Look into *Joel* 3. 10. *Beat your plow-ſhares into ſwords, and your pruning hooks into ſpears.* Men ſhould be ſo greedy of the war, that the text tells you, they ſhould beat their inſtruments of husbandry, into inſtruments of cruelty; all cauſes ſhall concur. When men are greedy of war, and long to taſt of that cup, it is a ſign God makes the war. But would you know now, when God makes peace? when all cauſes concur to it. In *Iſa.* 2. 4. You have the quite contrary expreſſion, *They ſhall beat their ſwords into plow-ſhares, and their ſpears into pruning-hooks; the mountains ſhall bring forth peace, and ſo ſhall the little hills too.* Every man in his ſeveral place ſhall promote it. 9. It ſhall bear down all oppoſition.

10. When it is Gods peace, it will be peace with a bleſſing. *The Lord will bleſs his people with peace*, Pſalm 29. 11. The greateſt curſes many times, come under pretence of the greateſt bleſſings. God tells them: *I will curſe your bleſſings.* There is indeed no bleſſing more deſirable then peace, yet a great curſe may be incloſed in it. Take an inſtance in *Dan.* 11. 23, 24. *And after the league made with him* (that is between the King of the North, that is of *Aſſyria*, and the King of the South, *Ptolomy* King of *Egypt*) *he ſhall work deceitfully. Antiochus* makes a peace with the King of *Egypt*, and under this pretence, he doth four things. 10. It is peace with a bleſſing.

Firſt, he ſcattered among them, great ſpoils and riches; he ſhall ſcatter among them, the prey, and ſpoil, and

riches, thereby he ſhall inſinuate himſelf into their affections.

Secondly, he ſhall forecaſt devices againſt the ſtrong holds, by putting difference between him and his brother, all this was under pretence of peace.

Thirdly, he raiſeth an Army, he ſhall ſtir up his power and his courage againſt the King of the South with a great Army, then he will fight: but when he comes to fight, then the text ſaith, the King of the South ſhall be ſtirred up to battle againſt him with a very great and mighty Army, but he ſhall not ſtand: the King of the South could not ſtand, why? they that feed of the portion of his meat deſtroyed him. The King of the North had corrupted his Commanders.

Fourthly, when the King of *Egypt* had the worſt, he would have a treaty, and thereupon the King of *Egypt* entertains *Antiochus*. And it is ſo, *both theſe Kings hearts are to do miſchief, and they ſpeak lyes at one table.* Now what is the fruit of this? Compare this with *Dan.* 8. 25. where you have a deſcription of the ſame man; there it is ſaid, *through his policy he ſhall cauſe craft to proſper in his hand, and by peace he ſhall deſtroy many.* Peace is a curſe to them, but when God gives peace, it ſhall be a bleſſing. In *Pſalm* 11. 6. you read of a ſtrange ſtorm, upon the wicked *God ſhall rain ſnares, fire and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt:* did you ever hear of ſuch a ſtorm? the meaning is, God will ſend inevitable judgements, and ſudden. Men ſhould fall upon them, as ſnares at unawares. God threatens ſtorms of blood, but no ſtorm is ſo dangerous, as when God rains ſnares. Look then you that deſire peace, that it be a peace of Gods making.

Uſe. Ceaſe from man, and look up to God for peace.

If this be ſo, that God, and only God can heal the great breaches that are between brethren; then ceaſe from man. Do not look for peace by an arm of fleſh any more. You may conceive what you pleaſe, and think multitudes and clamours will do much. But the Lord hath ſaid, *My ſword is bathed in heaven*, Iſa. 34. 5. the ſword is bathed in heaven by Gods purpoſe and decree. And if ſo, it is in vain for any man to think to ſheath it. When the Queſtion is demanded, *Jer.* 47. 6. *Oh thou ſword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet?* the ſword is quick in anſwering, *How can it be quiet, ſeeing*

seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against Askelon? If God give the ſword a charge, it is in vain to think by humane policies to ſheath that ſword; there may be overtures, and all lawful means uſed, and *the Lord ſcatter the people that delight in war!* but do not truſt to an arm of fleſh.

This would be a great pledge, that the dayes of peace were near, and your warfare accompliſhed, if your hearts were taken off from man. That you were come to ſay, Aſhur *ſhall not ſave us, we will not ride upon horſes, neither will we ſay any more to the works of our hands, ye are our Gods, for in thee the fatherleſs findeth mercy*, Hoſ. 14. 3. And till God make you fatherleſs, and let you ſee all wayes and means of yours are without hope, I have little hope you ſhall have peace.

But you will ſay: ſhall we then ſit ſtill: ſhall the ſword devour for ever? *Object.*

I anſwer, no, *ſeek peace and enſue it*, but ceaſe from men, and look up to him in whoſe hands the two ſticks muſt become one. You will ſay, *Anſw.*

What ſhall we do to obtain this peace? *Queſt.*

Labour to be ſenſible, that the controverſie is the Lords controverſie. See what the Lord tells the Prophet, *Ezek.* 21. 9. *Son of man, propheſie and ſay, Thus ſaith the Lord, a ſword, a ſword is ſharpened, and alſo furbiſhed; it is ſharpened to make a ſore ſlaughter: it is furbiſhed, that it may glitter.* What ſword is it? why it is חרב בני *the ſword of my ſon that contemneth every tree.* So long as you contend with potſheards like your ſelves, and look no further: you will be far from peace. When you can ſay with *David*, *Let him alone, the Lord hath bid him curſe* David. And as *Joſeph*, *you did it not, but God ſent me before*, when you are brought to this on both ſides, the rage of your ſpirits would be much abated. What we muſt do to obtain peace. *Anſ.* 1. Be ſenſible it is the Lords controverſie.

Accept the puniſhment you have undergone, ſit down and be ſeriouſly affected with the miſery of a civil war. God doth look for ſomewhat elſe from you, then to talk, ſuch an Army is routed, ſuch a City taken. God requires you ſhould ſit down in ſorrow under the apprehenſions of his wrath. The Frenchman ſaid, *England* is a monſtrous beaſt, that cannot dye unleſs it kill it ſelf. God hath ſent an evil ſpirit among 2. Accept the puniſhment.

among you, and he looks you ſhould ſtoop under his hand.

3. Exerciſe faith on promiſes.

Exerciſe faith on theſe glorious promiſes, *Eſa.* 66. 12. and *Jer.* 32. 39, 40, 41. and *Eſay* 2. 4. Suck theſe breaſts of conſolation. Nothing will bring peace to the State ſooner. That is the promiſe, *Eſay* 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee*: ſtay your hearts upon him in the promiſe. No ſtay upon God, no peace from him.

4. Both parties muſt be ſeriouſly humbled and pray one for the other.

Let both parties joyn together in ſerious humiliation of ſoul before God, and pray one for another. I have known ſome perſons at variance, pray themſelves friends, and I know no reaſon but parties ſhould do ſo. *I will hearken what God the Lord will ſpeak* (ſaith *David*) *for he will ſpeak peace unto his people*, Pſal. 85. 8. When doth God ſpeak peace? in anſwer to prayer: and if it be ſo to a perſon, it will be ſo to a State too. In *Judg.* 21. 2, 3. there was a great war fallen out, and God had given the Benjamites into their brethrens hands, who had ſlain many thouſands of them. How ſhould this be cloſed, *the people came to the houſe of God, and abode there till even before the Lord, and lift up their voyces, and wept ſore, and then they complained to the Lord*, and ſaid, *O Lord God of* Iſrael, *why is this come to paſs?* If God would be pleaſed to ſubdue the pride and haughtineſs of mens hearts; I know no reaſon, but you may pray your ſelves friends.

5. Condeſcend as far is lawful

Yeild ſo far as is lawful, even from your own right: ſo far as the ſafety of Religion, and the Kingdom will permit, keep not difference at hand. It is wiſe counſel, *Eccleſ.* 10. 4. *If the ſpirit of the Ruler riſe up againſt thee, leave not thy place: for yeilding pacifieth great offences.* The Lord doth not mean you ſhould yeild in a way of ſin: but ſo far, as without danger of religion and publick ſafety you may: there be a generation of men that endeavour to bear up all in a height. Let every one abate of his right ſo far as he may.

6. Set your ſelves in a way of peace.

Set your ſelves in a way of peace. Here I ſhall inſtance in this double breach among this people, in the Church-ſtate, and in the Civil-ſtate. Now we ſhall ſee what is Gods way in making up the breaches in both theſe.

For the Civil ſtate.

Firſt for the Civil-ſtate, if you will have a peace, ſuch as God makes, there are theſe ſix directions.

The

The way to peace is, a ſingle ſincere and hearty deſire of peace on both ſides. If men ſpeak peace in their lips, and war be in their hearts, it will never do. 1.

Endeavour to grow into a mutual confidence one of another. All true peace is the fruit of love: elſe you will do, as the two Kings in *Dan.* 10. meet together and imagine miſchief, and ſpeak lyes at one table. 2.

Look not back in repeating what is paſt, but look forward to prevent what is to come. But you will ſay, muſt it not be a peace with righteouſneſs, and execution of juſtice? I anſwer, *Joab* had deſerved death as truly as any man. Yet *David* ſayes, *the ſons of* Zerviah *are too hard for me*, and reſerved the execution of juſtice to a fitter opportunity: the State of the Kingdom would not bear it then. 3.

Let incendiaries on both ſides be ſet apart; there are a generation of men that delight in war, all ſuch muſt be laid aſide in the conſideration of peace. 4.

There muſt be a determination of the rights on both ſides. 5.

So far as may ſtand with the ſafety of the Common-wealth, and preſervation of Religion to be yeilding on both ſides. It was good counſel that was given to *Rehoboam*, *If thou wilt be a ſervant unto this people this day, and wilt ſerve them, and anſwer them, and ſpeak good words to them, then they will be thy ſervants for ever*, 1 Kings 12. 7. And it is as good that *Solomon* gives in *Eccleſ.* 10. 4. *yeilding pacifieth wrath.* 6.

Secondly for the Church-ſtate to make peace there, the differences are to be conſidered, as fundamental or ſuperſtructory. For the Church-ſtate.

In fundamentals, as to differences there, there muſt be no peace. *You muſt contend earneſtly for the faith*, Jude 2. you muſt break peace for truths ſake. In theſe, whether hereſie or tyranny, there can be no peace; therefore in this, every one do your duty. You who are private perſons, *receive not ſuch into your houſes*, 2 John 10. Churches, *do not bear them that are evil*, Rev. 2. 2. Magiſtrates, do you your duties, you muſt be *nurſing fathers*: and how can you be ſo, if you permit unwholeſome food to be given to your children? He that would be better ſatisfied, touching the power of the Civil Magiſtrate, let him read Mr. *Cottons* anſwer to the bloody tenent, and Mr. *Burroughs* his heart diviſions. 1.

For

2. For things of leſs moment, things built on the foundation, matters of order, the way to peace lyes in ſix things.

1. Seek the truth with an humble heart. The cauſe of our errors, is Satans meeting with proud and wanton ſpirits.

2. Avoid needleſs and vain queſtions. *Felix Eccleſia in quâ nova de Deo dicere levitas habetur.* Happy is that Church, in which it is accounted lightneſs to coyn new doctrines, or to ſpeak of God, and the things of God in new wayes of expreſſion. When men once grow empty of the power of godlineſs within, then they grow much in externals. When the Phariſees had loſt the power of godlineſs in their hearts, then they grew abundantly in excrements, of Tithing, Aniſe, and Cummin, and the like.

3. Let there be a ſincere practiſing of what you agree in.

4. Follow the truth in love, engage not beyond your principles for a parties ſake.

5. Let every one keep his own ſtation. Thus you may hope for peace, and if it be ſuch a peace, a peace made by the Lord, it will be peace with a bleſſing.

But when ſhall this be? what is the time, when God will unite divided brethren? when ſhall the two ſticks become one? Look into the twenty third and twenty ſeventh verſes, the Lord tells them, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people.* When God returns to them in mercy, and the breach between God and them is made up, then the breach ſhall be made up between them and their brethren. Now that you may a little heighten this mercy, conſider what this breach was. There was a double breach between the ten Tribes, and the two ſticks were divided in the dayes of *Jeroboam*, when God rent the ten Tribes from the houſe of *David*, and they continued two diſtinct Kingdoms till they were carried into captivity, and were never again united. Yet after their return out of captivity, God ſayes; *I will break the brotherhood between* Judah *and* Iſrael, *Zach.* 11. 14. Why? the ſticks were become two before. The Lord there compares himſelf to a Shepheard, and his people to a flock, and he feeds them with Shepheards ſtaves. So he ſaith in *ver.* 7. *I will feed the flock of ſlaughter, even you O poor of the flock. And I took unto*

me

me two ſtaves, the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands, and I fed the flock. One was the ſtaffe of beauty, a glorious order of government amongſt them. When confuſion came in, then God brake the ſtaffe of beauty; the other was the ſtaffe of bands, and that was love and amity. When diviſion came in, then the Lord brake this ſtaffe of bands. But from the dayes of *Rehoboam* downwards, this people were never reunited, *but in the ninth year of* Hoſea, *the King of* Aſſyria *took* Samaria, *and carried all* Iſrael *away captive into* Aſſyria, 2 *Kings* 17. 6. Why doth the Lord then ſay, he will break the ſtaffe of bands afterwards, when it was broken before? *Object.*

It is true, there was ſuch a breach in *Rehoboams* time, and it was never made up. Yet after that breach, the Prieſts and Levites left the Kingdom of *Iſrael* and came up to *Jeruſalem*, and after their example, all that were godly in the ten Tribes removed themſelves into the Kingdom of *Judah*, 2 Chron. 11. 13, 14, 15, 16. *And the Prieſts and the Levites, that were in all* Iſrael *reſorted to him* (Rehoboam) *out of all their coaſts.* (For the Levites left their ſuburbs, and their poſſeſſions, and came to *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*; for *Jeroboam* and his ſons had caſt them off from executing the Kings office unto the Lord) *and after them out of all the Tribes of* Iſrael, *ſuch as ſet their hearts to ſeek the Lord God of* Iſrael, *came to* Jeruſalem *to ſacrifice unto the Lord God of their Fathers:* ſo that there was ſome brotherhood and union ſtill. But after they had betrayed the Lord of life, and ſold him for thirty pieces of ſilver (*a goodly price*) for ſo you have it in the context, then ſaith God, I will break the ſtaffe of bands. I will cauſe a greater breach between this people, then ever before. When was that? look to the condition of this people, when *Jeruſalem* was taken. They were divided into three parts: and by their diviſions among themſelves, thouſands periſhed by their own hands. *Joſephus* ſaith, thoſe within *externum bellum quo internis malis liberarentur explicarent.* Now you have the ſtaves twice broken, ſhall they ever become one again? Yes, ſaith God, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people, and they ſhall become one in my hand.* Both theſe breaches, the text tells you, ſhall be made up, when the Lord *Anſ.*

ſhall

ſhall be their God, and they ſhall be his people. And ſo we come to the ſecond obſervation.

Doct. 2. The re-union of a divided people among themſelves, is the fruit of their reconciliation with their God.

This I ſhall endeavor to prove, and to give the grounds of it, and apply it.

Four concluſions for proof of it. For the proof of it, I ſhall lay down four concluſions, in which you ſhall ſee it evidently cleared.

1. God hath ſometimes a controverſie with men. 1. We read in Scripture of the Lords controverſie with a people. *Hear the Word of the Lord, ye children of* Iſrael, *for the Lord hath a controverſie with the inhabitants of the land,* Hoſ.4.1. *Hear O ye mountains the Lords controverſie,* Mic.6.2. there is ſomething in difference between God and them. God hath a quarrel with them. *I will bring a ſword upon you, that ſhall avenge the quarrel of my Covenant,* Levit. 26.25. Then there is a controverſie God hath with men, and there be a people God hath a quarrel with in all the differences that are between men. I do not ſay, mens quarrels are alway Gods quarrel, but there is Gods controverſie in mens.

2. Gods controverſie is often managed by the differences of men among themſelves. 2. God doth uſually manage his own controverſie and quarrel, by the differences of men amongſt themſelves, ſo that all the creatures ſhall be but Inſtruments of the Lords vengeance. Hence he is called, *the Lord of Hoſts,* of the hoſts of all the creatures. He doth ſo manage them all, that in whatever they do, they do but fight the Lords battles. *The Lord God called to contend by fire, and it devoured the great deep, and did eat up a part,* Amos 7.4. It is ſpoken of an extraordinary drought that brought a barrenneſs. So in *Ezek.* 38.22. *I will plead with him with peſtilence, and with blood, and I will rain upon him and upon his bands, and upon the people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hail-ſtones, fire and brimſtone.* So it is in all wars. Look into *Jer.* 25.31. *The Lord hath a controverſie with the Nations, he will plead with all fleſh, he will give them that are wicked to the ſword.* God will contend, and he will contend with the ſword of men. So in *Iſa.*19.2. *I will ſet the Egyptians againſt the Egyptians, and they ſhall fight every one againſt his brother, and every one againſt his neighbour: City againſt City, and Kingdom againſt Kingdom.* The Lord comes againſt *Egypt* with a quarrel,

quarrel, and he comes terribly, and ſuddenly, for he comes exalted upon *a ſwift cloud*, ſo it is in the firſt verſe. And what is it to do? to ſet the Egyptians one againſt another, *&c.* they roſe up one againſt another, they managed their own quarrel. Yea, but it was God ſet them one againſt another. *Behold* (ſaith God, *Jer.* 13.13.) *I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the Kings that ſit on* Davids *throne, and the Prieſts, and the Prophets, and all the inhabitants of* Jeruſalem *with drunkenneſs.* They ſhall be drunk with wrath, as with ſweet wine, and drunk under wrath, and yet inſenſible of it. And what ſhall be the fruit of it? *I will daſh them one againſt another, even the fathers and the ſons together.* So in *Matth.* 3.10. *For now is the ax laid to the root of the tree.* What is that ax? the power of the Roman Empire. As *Babylon* of old was called Gods battle-ax, by which he cut down Nations, ſo God brings this ax, and lays it to the root of the tree. What was that? that on which the ſtate of *Juda* did grow; which was partly the preſence of God in Ordinances, partly Civil government, partly the Saints of God that grow up amongſt them. I have lopt off the branches before, ſaith God, now I will cut up root and all. Little did the Romans think this then; when the ſword comes, it pleads the Lords quarrel.

3. When Gods quarrel is ended, and this controverſie is over, then all differences among the creatures ſhall ceaſe. See it in a perſon, *Prov.* 16.7. *When a mans wayes pleaſe the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.* When God and man are reconciled, then all mens differences ceaſe. In a nation it is ſo, *Jer.* 32.39. *I will give them one heart and one way.* When is that? *they ſhall be my people, and I will be their God.* So in *Iſa.* 32.18. *And my people ſhall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in ſure dwellings, and in quiet reſting places.* When ſhall that be? look into *ver.* 15. *when the ſpirit is poured on them from on high.* And *Iſa.* 60.17. *I will make their officers peace, and their exactors righteouſneſs.* When ſhall that be? look into *Iſa.* 61.10. When the land is married to the Lord. When God is angry with a people, he will make their beſt friends at variance with them. God puts it into the hearts of the ten Kings, that gave their power to

3. When Gods controverſie is ended, mens differences ceaſe.

the beast to hate the whore, and to make her desolate and naked, and to eat her flesh, and burn her with fire, *Rev.* 17. 16, 17. and when God is appeased, he makes their greatest enemies at peace with them. What people were ever greater enemies, then the Jew and the Gentile? when God comes to have mercy on them, he saith, *the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their Kings shall minister unto thee; the sons also of them that afflicted thee, shall come bending unto thee: and all they that despised thee, shall bow down themselves down at the soles of thy feet: and they shall call thee the City of the Lord, the* Zion *of the Holy one of* Israel, *Isa.* 60. 10. and ver. 14.

4. Till Gods controversie be taken up, all endeavours of peace will be vain.

4. Till Gods controversie be taken up, all the endeavours of the creature shall be vain and ineffectual. See the last verse of the ninth of *Daniel*, where there is a mighty army comes up against *Jerusalem*, it is spoken of the last destruction of *Jerusalem* by the Roman army. *The people of the Prince that shall come, shall destroy the City, and the Sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the Covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.* God had decreed a desolation upon them, and all the means in the world would not prevent it. I shall give you some instances of several attempts men have made, but in vain till Gods controversie hath been taken up. There was a division in the Roman Empire, the feet and toes were part of iron, and part of clay, *Dan.* 2. 43. And they endeavoured by marriages to make up an agreement, *they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men*: but the text tells you, it shall not do: *they shall not cleave one to another.* In *Dan.* 11. 17. there was a war between the King of the North, and the King of the South: and endeavours were used for a peace: but Gods controversie was not taken up. One of them offers his daughter *Cleopatra* to the other to wife: he shall give him the daughter of women corrupting her: but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him: that would not end it. And in *ver.* 27. these two Kings meet at a treaty,

but

but *it ſhall not proſper*, ſaith God. If you ask the reaſon why peace cannot be made, you will have the ſame anſwer that the ſword gives, *Jer.* 47. 7. How can it be quiet, ſeeing the Lord hath given it a charge againſt *Askelon*, and againſt the ſea ſhore? there hath he appointed it. This proves the doctrine that it is ſo; Till there be reconciliation with God, there can be no re-union between divided brethren. And there be four great grounds of it.

When God is reconciled, mens differences ſhall be ended; for when God is reconciled, the ſin of a Nation is pardoned. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, ſaith your God: ſpeak ye comfortably to* Jeruſalem, *and cry unto her, that her warfare is accompliſhed, that her iniquity is pardoned; for ſhe hath received of the Lord double for all her ſins*, Iſa. 40. 1, 2. When her ſin is pardoned, her warfare is accompliſhed; and that is Gods promiſe, and the method he will uſe. *I will pardon their ſin, and heal their land*, 2 Chron. 7. 14. Uſually when God takes away the guilt of ſin by pardon, he doth remove the effects of ſin. Indeed it is not ſo alwayes. God had pardoned *Davids* ſin, and yet the child dyed, and the ſword did not depart from his houſe. But uſually it is ſo, when God hath brought a ſword on a land, when once he pardons the ſins of it, he removes the ſword. *In thoſe dayes, and in that time, ſaith the Lord, the iniquity of* Iſrael *ſhall be ſought for, but there ſhall be none: and the ſins of* Judah, *but they ſhall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reſerve*, Jer. 50. 20. then, and not till then, he brings *Iſrael* again to his habitation, as it is in *ver.* 19. when God hath pardoned their ſin, what ſhall be the fruit of it? *Then, ſaith he, I will bring them to their own land.* So in *Joel* 2. 18, 19, 20. When God returns to a land, ſee what he doth. *Then ſhall the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people. Yea, the Lord will anſwer and ſay unto his people; Behold, I will ſend you corn, and wine, and oyl, and ye ſhall be ſatisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen. But I will remove far from you the Northern army, and I will drive him into a land barren and deſolate*, &c. Thus when God returns to a Nation, and pardons their ſin, he removes the plague; this he promiſeth he will do, *thou ſhalt be in league with the ſtones of the field*,

Reaſ. 1. When God is reconciled, a Nation is pardoned.

and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee, Job 5. 23. *In that day will I make a Covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow, and the sword, and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lye down safely.* When is this? see in the next words. *And I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, in judgement, in loving-kindness, and in mercies,* Hos. 2. 18, 19. this is the fruit of the second Covenant. When God takes a people into Covenant with himself, or renews his Covenant with them, receiving them again into favour, then he makes a Covenant of peace between them, and the most disagreeing creatures: they shall be so in Covenant with them, that they need fear no evil from them.

Reas. 2. Their iniquity is healed. When God is reconciled, the iniquity shall not only be pardoned, but healed. When God is reconciled, he heals the wound at the bottom. It is sin only that hath occasioned all the divisions in the world; sin makes division, grace makes union. Sin dividing between God and man, hath set division among all the creatures: between Angels and Angels, between Angels and men, between men and men, and between men and the rest of the creatures. You read of *Michael* the Archangel (it is not meant of Christ, as may appear by the phrase there used, *durst not*, Jude 9. *you read of* Michael) *contending with the devil.* Sin hath bred difference between Angels and Angels, and between Angels and men, *Dan.* 10. 20. An Angel goes forth to fight against the Prince of *Persia.* Between men and devils; Satan is so called, because he is an adversary. And between men and the rest of the creatures; God must make a league for you with these, before the breach will be made up. Now let man be reconciled to God, and the sin be healed, and all these differences shall cease; all differences between Angels and men, *the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the son of man,* John 1. last. There becomes an intercourse between Angels and men; and a league is made with all the creatures on your behalf. Let but sin be healed, and you may make a league between the cruellest enemies in the world. *The envy of* Ephraim *shall depart:* Ephraim *shall no more envy* Judah, *nor* Judah *vex* Ephraim.

When

When God comes to a Nation in mercy, he comes with a spirit of grace, and a spirit of burning. There be four things in sin that necessarily cause division.

Four things in sin that necessarily cause division.

1. Every lust is proud; you have that expression, 2 *Tim.* 3. 2. *lovers of themselves, covetous, proud,* &c. Only by pride comes contention; and till pride be healed, it is impossible differences should be reconciled:

1. It is proud.

2. Lust is fierce and impatient of opposition, or contradiction, *the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live,* Eccles. 9. 3. Stop a mad man in his way, how do his spirits rise? *Solomon* expresseth it notably, *Haughty scorner is his name that dealeth in proud wrath.* Let but *Balaams* Ass stop or turn aside, the man is in a rage. Let *Mordecai* stand in the way of *Hamans* honour, how fierce is the man? an whole Nation is too little to satisfie his rage. But now when grace comes in, see how that alters a man. *Prov.* 17. 27. *The man of understanding is* קר־רוח *of a cool spirit.* He knows how to forbear, and how to forgive; but as good meet a Bear robbed of her whelps, as an ungodly man, or a godly man either, when his lust is up in a way of evil.

2. Fierce.

3. Lust is cruel and vindictive. *Jacob* speaks it of his two sons, *Simeon* and *Levi*, *O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly mine honour be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their rage they digged down a wall; cursed be their anger, for it was fierce, and their wrath, for it was cruel,* Gen. 49. 6, 7. Where ever lust bears sway, it is fierce and cruel. Take but an instance in a godly man, *David*: it was while that sin of adultery and murder lay on his conscience, that *Rabbah* was taken: and upon the taking of the City, *he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kilns, and thus did he unto all the children of* Ammon, 2 *Sam.* 12. 31. You never heard *David* used such cruelty at any other time. *Aurelius Victor* saith of *Theodosius* a godly man, that when his lust was up by occasion of a difference, wherein one of his servants was slain, he made an edict, by which seven thousand were put to death. Thus the Philistines dealt by revenge, and

3. Cruel and vindictive.

took vengeance with a deſpiteful heart to deſtroy Gods people for the old hatred, *Ezek.* 25. 15. Luſt is cruel and vindictive, and ſo long as ſin is unhealed, never look for peace.

4. Inſatiable.

4. Luſt is inſatiable. *Ariſtotle* obſerves, that luſt is infinite. The Prophet ſaith of the blind watchmen, *they were greedy dogs, which can never have enough*, Iſa. 56. 11. Their luſt of drunkenneſs made them cry out, *Come, we will fetch wine, and fill our ſelves with ſtrong drink, and tomorrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundant*, ver. 12. Such was the *Caldeans* covetouſneſs; *He enlargeth his deſire as hell, and as death, and cannot be ſatisfied, lading himſelf with thick clay*, Hab. 2. 5, 6. A man that hath luſt in his heart, give him your honour, that will not ſatisfie him: Luſt hath never enough. Till theſe be healed, never look for peace in a Nation. But when God comes, and is reconciled, and heals their ſins, *then the Wolf ſhall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard ſhall lye down with the Kid: and the Calf and the young Lion, and the fatling together, and a little child ſhall lead them*, Iſa. 11. 6. God reſembles men to fierce beaſts, and he tells them, he will aſſwage their rage, and compoſe their ſpirits, that they ſhall be as the moſt harmleſs creatures. Thus when God pardons ſin and heals it, he will remove the ſword; there is no way to have peace made up in a divided Nation, but by making your peace with God.

Real. 3. When God is reconciled, he removes evil inſtruments

When God returns to a people in mercy, he will remove evil Angels, and evil inſtruments. It was one of the curſes that came on *Egypt*, *He caſt upon them the fierceneſs of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by ſending evil Angels among them*, Pſal. 78. 49. Some Interpreters ſay, they were good Angels, but called evil, becauſe of the evil effects they produced. I cannot conſent to that interpretation. I know no text where רע is ſo uſed. When God is diſpleaſed with a people, he gives evil Angels power over them. And it is a mighty work that Satan hath on ſuch τῷ πνεύματι ἐνεργοῦντι, *the ſpirit that worketh mightily in the children of diſobedience*, Eph. 2. 2. The Lord was diſpleaſed with the men of *Shechem*, and he ſent an evil ſpirit between them and *Abimelech*. It is an excellent Scripture, that

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in *Isa.* 19. 14. *The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof* (speaking of *Egypt*) *and they have caused* Egypt *to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit.* You read in the beginning of the Chapter, the Lord threatned he would set one Egyptian against another. How? here he tells you, I will mingle a perverse spirit, a crooked spirit among them. As when you mingle water and wine together, there is not a drop of wine, but there is water with it; so this perverse spirit should make them err in every work they do. Men do not do alwayes their own works, but the devils work. When God was displeased with *Ahab*, he sends an evil spirit to seduce him. But now when God is reconciled to a people, he causeth these evil Angels to depart out of the Nation; they shall stir up jealousies and rage no more. *He will cause the Prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land*, Zach. 13. 2. The Lord speaks of healing the errors and heresies of the time. God might have taken away the false Prophets, and there might have rose up others. Yea, but God will cause the evil spirit (that made the false Prophet) to depart out of the land. In *Rev.* 20. 2, 3. you read of an *Angel that came down from heaven having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the Dragon, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the Nations no more.* There is in that book, a double state of the Church on earth: a militant, and in comparison of that, a triumphant state, when all her enemies shall be under her feet. This Chapter begins the triumphant state. Now what doth God do to bring in this triumphant state? he sends an Angel from heaven to bind Satan. It notes the restraint of Providence, the mighty hand of God, in restraining Satans power. You may understand this by comparing with it *Rev.* 9. 14. where there is a command to *loose the four Angels which were bound in the great river* Euphrates. What were these four Angels? the Turkish Commanders, whom God did restrain for a while, that they could not invade the Christian world on this side *Euphrates*. Now God enlargeth their power, and they invade the Roman Empire. In this

sense:

ſenſe now is Satan bound. God reſtrains him that he ſhall not ſeduce the ſpirits of men, nor ſtir them up one againſt another. And that this is the meaning, you may ſee in *ver.* 8. *When Satan was looſed, he goes out to deceive the Nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together in battle*: as ſoon as he is looſe, he ſtirs them up to war again. And as God reconciled cauſeth evil Angels, ſo he cauſeth evil inſtruments to depart too. You read in *Rev.* 16. 13, 14. of Emiſſaries ſent abroad, unclean ſpirits, *ſpirits of devils*, ſo they are called. And what is their buſineſs? they go forth to the Kings of the earth to gather them to battle, to ſtir them up to war againſt the Saints. When the Lord ſhall be reconciled to a people, theſe evil inſtruments ſhall alſo depart. The Lord will not give over a Nation, to whom he is reconciled, to a cruel Lord, a fierce King ſhall not rule over them, as he threatned the Egyptians, *Iſa.* 19. 4. *But he will cauſe them to have juſt ballances, and a juſt Ephah, and a juſt bath*, Ezek. 45. 10. *He will make their officers peace, and their exactors righteouſneſs*, Iſa. 60. 7.

Reaſ. 4. A people to whom God is reconciled, have a right to all the promiſes.

When God is reconciled to a people, they have an hereditary right to all the promiſes. There are great promiſes in Scripture to a people, to whom God is reconciled. *The Lord will give ſtrength to his people: he will bleſs his people with peace*, Pſal. 29. 11. *I will extend peace to them as a river.* Jeruſalem *ſhall be a quiet habitation*: all ſhall conduce to it, the mountains and the little hills, *Pſal.* 72. 3. Peace ſhall come in from all parts of the land as ſome: or as others, the Supream Magiſtrate and Magiſtrates of a lower condition; all ſhall promote peace. *The Lord of peace himſelf give you peace alwayes, by all means*, 2 Theſ. 3. 16. That is the prayer, and every prayer hath a promiſe in the womb of it. Every thing ſhall bring peace to an heir of promiſe. Do but conſider, what is more oppoſite to peace, then Officers and Exactors? yet that is the promiſe, I will make their Officers peace, and their Exactors righteouſneſs, *Iſa.* 60. 17. When God would bring his people out of *Egypt*, how did every thing concur? *againſt any of the children of* Iſrael *not a dog ſhall move his tongue*, Exod. 11. 7. When God will bring peace, he breaks the bow, and ſnaps the ſpear in ſunder, and burneth

burneth the chariots in the fire. Not a dog ſhall wag his tongue. Your peace ſhall be as a river that ſhall bear down all oppoſition. Thus you ſee the grounds of the point, Whence it comes to paſs, that the re-union of a divided people is the fruit of their reconciliation with their God.

Uſe 1. See hence the reaſon why our diviſions continue.

The firſt uſe we ſhall make of it, is an uſe of Inſtruction, or Information. If this be a truth, then learn what the reaſon is, why your diviſions are continued. Learn hence to know the cauſe of your diviſions, and the continuance of them. The Lord hath a quarrel with this people, and his controverſie is not taken up: no wonder then that your diviſions continue. You may ſuffer the violence of your ſpirits to run out, and to run over: but remember what God tells them, the cauſe is from the Lord, 1 *King.* 12. 15. While his quarrel continues, it is in vain to look for peace.

1. Why our hopes are fruſtrated.

1. See how it comes to paſs, that all your hopes have been fruſtrated. How you have deceived your ſelves with ſleekt deluſions, You have promiſed your ſelves many ſucceſſes in your attempts for peace: but you have been diſappointed, all hath proved but *as a brook that paſſeth away*; and when your hopes were at the higheſt, they have left you. What is the reaſon? God is not appeaſed. You cry out with them in *Jer.* 8. 15. *We looked for peace, but no good came: and for a time of health, and behold trouble*, and as it is in *ver.* 20. of the ſame Chapter, *the harveſt is paſt, the ſummer is ended, and we are not ſaved: and like the inhabitants of* Samaria, *your wound is become incurable*, Mic. 1. 9. All your hopes fail, your bloſſoms are nipped, what is the reaſon? the Lords controverſie continues.

2. Why inſtruments are in vain.

2. Learn the reaſon, why you have cryed out to Inſtruments ſo long, and all in vain. You cry out as they, *Jer.* 8. 22. *Is there no balm in* Gilead? *is there no Phyſitian there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?* here is a double expoſtulation. The one hath the force of a vehement affirmation; the other of a bitter and ſad complaint. Is there no balm in *Gilead*? ſure there is. Where ſhould it be, if not in *Gilead*? Balm was in thoſe Eaſtern Countries of great price, and of great vertue; they looked on it as a *Catholicon*. And where was this to be had? in no

place ſo much as in *Gilead*: it was a gum or juyce that dropped out of a Shrub. You read in *Gen.* 37. 25. *that the* Iſhmaelites *came from* Gilead *with their Camels, bearing ſpicery, and balm, and myrrh.* The Iſhmaelitiſh Merchants had been for balm at *Gilead* to carry into *Egypt.* And where there are materials, there are alſo workmen. Where ſhould there be Phyſitians, if not there? I am perſwaded God hath given many of your Phyſitians, as conſcientious and holy men perſonally, as have been in any Parliament theſe hundred years. Then what is the reaſon your wound is not healed? here is balm, and here are Phyſitians. Then follows the ſad complaint, why then is not the wound of the daughter of my people healed? here is the anſwer. God doth not concur to the cure. It is a mighty expreſſion, that in the ſame Chapter, ver. 17, 18. God ſpeaks of *Cockatrices that ſhall not be charmed:* you may ſend your Charmers, but your evils are Cockatrices that ſhall not be charmed, the Lords controverſie is not taken up.

3. Why prayers return empty.

3. See the reaſon, why all your prayers return empty. The prayers of the Saints of God are of great value. One prayer of faith is more worth then all the world. What is the reaſon this ſhip returns without this rich lading? the Lord hides himſelf, *Thou haſt covered thy ſelf with a cloud, that our prayers cannot paſs through*, Lam. 3. 44. Many of you have got others to pray for you: but ſee what the Lord ſaith, *Though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me, my mind could not be toward this people*, Jer. 15. 1. *And though theſe three men* Noah, Daniel, *and* Job *were in it, they ſhould deliver but their own ſouls*, Ezek. 14. 14. They ſhall not prevail, and you ſee the reaſon. You may take up the complaint in *Lam.* 1. 14. *The yoke of my tranſgreſſions is bound by his hand, they are wreathed and come up upon my neck.* It is a yoke, and a yoke of my tranſgreſſions ſaith the Church, and I cannot ſhake it off, it is bound by his hand, and wreathed about my neck. The Lord hath brought you even to the haven, and then hath ſent out an *Euroclydon*, and ſent you back again into the Sea. He hath brought you to the borders of the land of *Canaan*, and given you to taſt of the grapes of *Eſchol*, that you may know the difference between the grapes of *Eſchol*, and the

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Onyons of *Egypt*; but he hath ſent you back into the wilderneſs again.

But you will ſay. Will God be diſpleaſed with a Nation? *Object.*

Yes. See what *Elihu* ſayes of him, *When he giveth quietneſs, who can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who can behold him? whether it be done againſt a Nation, or againſt a man only*, Job 34. 29. And God ſayes himſelf, though *Moſes* and *Samuel* ſtood before me, my heart could not be toward this people. *Iſrael* is called the *people of his wrath*, Iſa. 10. 6. And *Edom the people of his curſe*, Iſa. 34. 5. Then God can hide his face from a Nation, as well as from a perſon. Yea, all the Nations of the world are before him, *but as a drop of the bucket, and as a duſt to the balance.* *Anſw.* God hath ſometimes a controverſie with a Nation as well as with a perſon.

You will ſay, then God hath a controverſie with all the Nations of the world, for they have all of them been ever ſinful. How ſhall we know when ſins grow up into a national quarrel? *Object.* Sins grow up into a national quarrel.

If you would know, when ſins commence national, when God hath a national quarrel with a people, and for what, obſerve, 1. Thoſe ſins that univerſally overſpread the Kingdom, God looks upon as national ſins. What were the ſins of *Sodom? Pride, fulneſs of bread, and abundance of idleneſs.* They had abundance of other ſins beſides. Yea, but theſe did overſpread all the inhabitants. What were the ſins of the old world? *All fleſh had corrupted their way*: an univerſal corruption. So it was with this people. *They do evil with both hands earneſtly, and fill the land with evil, from corner to corner.* Not only the great men: *the Prince asketh, and the Judge asketh for a reward, and the great man uttereth his miſchievous deſire, ſo they wrap it up*, Mic. 7. 3. *But the Prophet and the Prieſt are prophane*, Jer. 23. 11. When ſins overſpread a Nation, theſe are grounds of a national quarrel to be taken up againſt them by God. *Anſ.* 1. When they univerſally overſpread.

2. When ſins are woven into the policy of a State, into the conſtitution of it. What was the National ſin of *Iſrael* after their revolt to *Jeroboam*? the calves of *Dan* and *Bethel*. In the ſixteenth of the *Revelations*, you read of a Vial poured out upon the Sun, the chiefeſt and higheſt light in the Roman hemiſphere: yet that did not eſcape the Vial. The Laws 2. When ſins woven into the policy of a State.

of a Nation, are as the Sun for light and influence, and so far as the Laws of a Kingdom do establish iniquity, they become national sins, *that plant which our heavenly Father will have plucked up*; so long as it is interwoven into the policy of a State and becomes national, it is a national sin.

3. When the people of God are corrupted with the sins of a Nation, when they that profess the name of God in sincerity and truth, are corrupted with the sins of the times, so far those sins become national. The Epitome of a Nation is the Saints, they have the spirits and life, and a Nation is not quite corrupted, when they are free. What was the sin, that brought the flood upon the old world? *the sons of God had corrupted their way, and they also were flesh*, Gen. 6. 2, 3. It is not grace alone will free a man from calamities in evil times, and from having his share in outward afflictions. Remember what the Apostle speaks, 1 *Pet.* 4. 18. *The righteous are scarcely saved.* You shall have this applied to eternal salvation; but this is not the meaning, the preceding words show it, *The time is come, that judgement shall begin at the house of God:* but the meaning is this. A godly man with much a do, endeavouring to keep himself unspotted, and mourning for the sins and iniquities of the times, is scarcely saved out of the common calamity, When judgement begins at the house of God, even the righteous are scarcely saved. It is the provocations of sons and daughters, that are the greatest provocations, and provoke God to bring judgements on a land, and therefore no wonder if they be scarcely saved, for when they be corrupted with the rest, the sins become national.

3. When the Saints are corrupted with them.

4. Sins become national, when all men love to have it so. When it comes to that pass that *Jerusalem* was come to, when God bids the Prophet, *Run to and fro through the streets of* Jerusalem, *and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgement, that seeketh the truth*; then judgement comes, when none complain, though Gods name be dishonoured, his Word blasphemed, his people spoken against. When there are few mourners to stand in the gap, when men can bear evil, when they not only do it themselves, but favour those

4. When all men love to have it so.

those that do it, *Rom.* 1. last. When it is thus, the sins become national, and no wonder if God have a controversie with the Nation.

Lastly, sins become national, and God looks upon them as national sins, when the bent, the general bent of the Nation go that way: when their course is evil and their force is not right. In every time, in every age there is some peculiar lust prevails. When men walk *according to the course of this world*, Eph. 2. 2. according to the temper and frame of the age of the world: such as the world is, such as the sins of the time, according to the fashion of the world. Such sins as the Nation are bent upon in the age, that is the sin of the Nation. An ancient historian long ago laid this on this Nation, as that for which they were reproached, to wit, *odium veritatis, amor mendacii*, the hatred of truth, and love of lyes: and the nearer men came to truth and hatred of error, the more men looked on them, *quasi Britanniæ subvertorem.* Did ever men love lying more, and the worst sort of lying, lying in hypocrisie, then in this age? Were ever the servants of God more hated then now? did ever the Romish wolves thirst after their blood more then now? Hatred of the truth, love of error, hating of the people of God, a willing declining to *Rome*, takes in the old leaven again. These be the national sins: go over them all, and examine the Nation from end to end, and you will find it so; and therefore our yoke is bound upon us by Gods hand. Our war is not like to cease, for Gods controversie is not taken up.

5. When the general bent of the Nation goes that way.

Let this then be for exhortation, to stir up every one of you to look up to God for reconciliation: and if you would have peace, to labour to reconcile God and the Nation: and to provoke you hereunto, consider, God hath a quarrel with Nations, as well as with men in particular. For,

Use 2. Look up to God for reconciliation.

1. God is the King of Nations, and his Kingdom ruleth over all: he hath spread his Word as a great *expansum* over all the world. *I have set thee* (saith God to *Jeremy*) *and ordained thee a Prophet unto the Nations. I have set thee this day, over the Nations and over the Kingdoms to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant*, Jer. 1. 5, 10. It is spoken in honour, not of *Jeremy* his per-

1. He is King of Nations.

son, but of the authority of the Word *Jeremy* was to preach. God will govern and rule the world by his Word: there he denounceth his judgements against the people of his curse, *Isa.* 34. 5. So God calls *Edom*, and *Jer.* 50. 21. *Caldea* is called *the land of Rebels*, עַל־הָאָרֶץ מְרָתַיִם go up against the land of the rebels.

2. He sets bounds to the sins of Nations.

2. God hath set periods and bounds to the sins of Nations, as well as of particular persons. *Thine end is come, and the measure of thy Covetousness, it is spoken of the Babylonish Kingdom*, Jer. 51. 13. of whom *Habakkuk* saith, *she enlarged her desire as hell, and could not be satisfied*, Hab. 2. 5. God puts an end to her sin. Read *Ezek.* 7. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. God doth often repeat it concerning *Israel*, *an end is come, the end is come, the time is come.* When the Ephah is full, God puts an end to the sins of a Nation.

3. When they have filled up the measure of their sins, God hides his face.

3. When a Nation hath filled up the measure of their sins, God hides his face from a Nation, as well as from a man. *When he hideth his face, who can behold him? whether it be done against a Nation or against a person*, Job 34. 29. And if you look into *Isa.* 63. 10. *They* (that is his people *Israel*) *rebelled against him and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy and fought against them.* The Lord fights against a Nation, as well as against a man.

4. God is reconciled to a Nation.

4. You read of a national reconciliation. God is angry with the Nation of the Jews and casts them off: but see *Isa.* 62. 4, 5. *Thou shalt no more be termed forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed, desolate; but thou shalt be called* Heph-zibah; *and thy land* Beulah, *for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a Virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the Bridegroom rejoyceth over the Bride; so shall thy God rejoyce over thee.* He is reconciled again. And after all the controversies that God hath had with all the Nations of the earth, the Lord *wipes away all tears from their eyes*, Rev. 7. 17. and all the causes of them shall be taken away, there shall be no more famine. God tells you in those dayes, *the Ox shall eat clean provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel, and with the fan*, Isa. 30. 24. *There shall be no more death*, Rev. 21. 4. *Neither shall they learn war any more*, Mic. 4. 3. God will make

make those judgements which have overturned so many Kingdoms to cease. Oh then labour to get God reconciled. Remember, sins committed by particular persons, may become national, as you have heard. Take heed of interweaving sin into the foundation and policy of your state. *Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a Law?* Psal. 94. 20. Take heed of building sin upon a Statute, such sins are hardly rooted out, but they bring destruction. *Jeroboam* enters on the Kingdom, and to establish it, he layes it in Idolatry, that was never rooted out till it rooted out the Nation. The ten Kings give their Kingdoms to the Beast, *Rev.* 17. 17. How do they do it? the holy Ghost expounds it, *ver.* 13. δυνάμιν καὶ τὴν ἐξουσίαν they gave their power and authority to him. Now look into *Rev.* 16. 8, 9. *The fourth Angel pours out his vial upon the Sun.* That work which God is now doing, and the Word he is now fulfilling. The fourth vial is now pouring out on the Sun. What is the Sun in the Antichristian world? by the Sun is meant the highest power, light, and authority in Church or State, so far as it holds of *Rome*; so the phrase is used in Scripture, *thy Sun shall no more go down*, Isa. 60. 20. *Non cessabit regnum tuum.* So a learned Interpreter. *Her Sun is gone down while it was yet day*, Jer. 15. 9. It is spoken of bringing down the glory of the Kingdom. When God brake the power of all the Pagan Empires, then was the seal opened that brought darkness on the Sun, *Rev.* 6. 12. When the fourth Angel sounded, the Sun was smitten, *Rev.* 8. 12. It signified the breaking of the power of the Roman Empire by the invasion of the *Gothes*. So far as there is a supremacy that comes from *Rome* and holds of *Rome*, God hath a Vial for it. And when the supremacy in the Pope shall be devolved to another, so far God hath a controversie with that Nation. So when the sins are universal, when *they are all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men*, Jer. 9. 2. *When they all look to their gain from their quarter*, Isa. 56. 11. When the people that profess the Name of God are corrupted: When few or none bewail or lay to heart the sins of the times: but they willingly walk after the Commandement. *When the Prophets prophesie lyes, and the Priests bear rule by their means;*

and

and the people love to have it so, Jer. 5. 31. When sin is openly tolerated and countenanced, or there is no Magistrate in the land to put them to shame, as it is charged upon the men of *Lachish*, Judg. 18. 7. No Master of restraint. It was charged on them in *Rehoboams* dayes, as a great evil, 1 *King.* 14. 24. that there were Sodomites in the land. That instance of *Achan* is strange; that the sin of one particular person, a secret sin, and that which none knew but himself, should cause the Lord to withdraw himself from the whole Camp, doth astonish. Interpreters look on it as a secret way of God beyond his ordinary dispensation; and it teacheth us, that the sin of one man may cause God to hide his face from a Nation, and that it is their duty to enquire into it, and endeavour it may be taken away and expiated. And have not we cause to suspect that our sins are become national, especially if we consider the predominant humor and temper of the Nation at this time? A mans beloved sin may change, and not be the same in youth that it is in age; nor after conversion as before: so may the sins of a Nation change. Why is *Rome* called *Babylon*, and *Sodom*, and *Egypt*? She is called *Babylon* for her sorcery and Idolatry, *Egypt* for her cruelty, and *Sodom* for her filthiness. Let us look to our national sins. Impenitency, when the vial was poured out on the Sun, and the people were scorched, this is charged on them, *they repented not to give glory to God*, Rev. 16. 8, 9. but on the contrary, the affliction enrageth men and draweth out the malignity of their spirits. *They blaspheme the name of God because of their plagues.* Is it not so with us? do not we hate reformation? may not God take up that complaint against us? *Jer.* 6. 29. *The bellows are burnt, the lead is consumed in the fire, the founder melteth in vain*; for the wicked are not plucked away: all means of reformation are in vain, *plumbeum manet integrum.* Hath not God strangly poured out that judgement upon the Nation, to believe lyes? it is both a sin and a judgement. *He gave them over to believe lyes that they might be damned: who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*, 2 Thes. 2. 11, 12. What a strange bitterness and enmity of spirit is there against such as profess godliness in truth? not only among profane ones, but such

as

as profeſs Religion in a higher ſphere? the vengeance of the Temple is the greateſt deſtruction, and God viſited *Babylon* for their rage againſt the Temple, *Jer.* 50. 28. Is there not reaſon then we ſhould be affected with theſe things? But you will ſay,

Be affected with the preſent judgements.

Queſt. What ſhould we be affected with?

Anſ. 1. Be affected with every degree of wrath that doth go forth from the Lord. God in national quarrels proceeds by degrees, ſo he did in ſeveral vials on *Rome*. When he had a controverſie with *Iſrael*, there is a pedegree of judgements. Gomer *the daughter of* Diblaim *brings forth firſt* Jezreel, *and then* Lo-ruhamah, *and then* Lo-ammi, *Hoſ.* 1. And as Gods people look on one mercy as the pledge of another: ſo one judgement ſhould make us fear another.

1. Becauſe God in national quarrels proceeds by degrees.

2. This ſhould affect us, that a people are ſo near ruine, and not affected with it. Chriſt comes to *Jeruſalem* on the day of his inauguration, when the people come with him ſinging *Hoſanna*: yet Chriſt even then weeps over *Jeruſalem*. What was it that affected him? one thing was the eminency of the danger, the evil that was ſhortly to come on them; but that was not all: it was the inſenſibleneſs of their preſent condition. *Oh! that thou hadſt known in this thy day, the things that concern thy peace*, Luk. 19. 42. They were as a man dead a ſleep on the top of a Maſt. *Lachryma Chriſti arguunt duritiem noſtram*: Chriſts tears argue our inſenſibleneſs.

2. That we are ſo inſenſible.

3. This ſhould affect you, That God doth uſually mix ſpiritual judgements with temporal. In *Rev.* 9. You have enemies, barbarous Nations, Sarazens and Turks invading the Roman Empire: and at the ſame time when they come, there are locuſts that ariſe out of the bottomleſs pit, locuſts for multitude, and of the nature of ſerpents, their faces were as the face of a man, they had hair as the hair of women, and teeth as the teeth of Lions: all lets you ſee, they were not natural, but metaphorical; and they had ſtings in their tails: what is meant by that? the propagation of that Mahumetan hereſie: the ſmoak that aroſe out of the bottomleſs pit in the beginning of the Chapter. Thus God brought a ſpiritual and a temporal judgement together.

3. Becauſe God uſually mixeth ſpiritual judgements with temporal

T Laſtly,

Laſtly, this ſhould wonderfully affect you, that God ſhould proceed ſo againſt a Nation, and the ſins of a Nation be filled up in your dayes. When it ſhall be ſaid to you, as it is, *Iſa.* 3. 6. *Be thou our ruler, let this ruine be under thy hand*: and ye ſhall ſay, *I will be no healer.* No man was willing, the ruine ſhould be under his government. For a man to be the laſt of his family, when his Anceſtors contributed to the ſin. For God to ſay to you as he did to *Ahab*, *I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy poſterity: and I will cut off from* Ahab *him that piſſeth againſt the wall, and him that is ſhut up, and him that is left in* Iſrael, 1 *King.* 21. 21. Or as he did to *Coniah*, *write this man childleſs*, Jer. 22. 30. How much ſhould this affect you? Much more when a Monarchy, a Kingdom ſhall expire in ſuch a mans dayes. It is recorded to the infamy of *Belſhazzar*, that the *Babylonian* Monarchy expired in his dayes, and to the reproach of *Antiochus*, that the *Caldean* Monarchy expired in his dayes. Let this then deeply affect you, that the ſins of the Nation, and their judgements too, ſhould be filled up and perfected in your dayes. Now then would you know how your breaches may be made up? how you may be reconciled amongſt your ſelves? how your treaties may be made ſucceſsful? Labour to reconcile God and the Nation, that the controverſie may be taken up between God and you. And here I would ſhow you,

Labor to reconcile God and the Nation.

1. That there is hope God will be reconciled, that though he bring the Kingdom low, yet he will not deſtroy it.

2. Who the perſons are, that muſt be imployed in this work.

3. What way they are to take to reconcile God and a people. It is one of the greateſt ſubjects in Divinity with reference to Gods diſpenſations here.

There is yet hope God will be reconciled.

For the firſt. I am perſwaded God will lay the Kingdom low, *The glory of* Jacob *ſhall be made thin*, Iſa. 17. 4. *the trees of the forreſt ſhall be ſo few, as a childe ſhall write them. God will abaſe the pride of all glory.* God will let no people go out of his hands, but he will conquer them: though you be not reformed, you ſhall be humbled: the people were brought out of *Babylon*, but they were unreformed ſtill.

There

There is a cup God hath put into the hands of all the reformed Churches. See it in *Germany*, God hath abaſed the Crown of their pride. You are fallen into the time of the death of the witneſſes. Who knoweth, whether Gods pouring out his Vial upon the Sun, do not prepare mens ſpirits for that? yet God will be reconciled again, and not deſtroy you, and that on theſe grounds.

1. This is one of the ten Kingdoms, that firſt departed from *Rome*. The ten Kings give up their power to the Beaſt, and *England* hath not been backward that way. But God will reduce them, *The Lamb ſhall overcome them*, not for deſtruction, but by converting them. God hath a number *of holy, and choſen, and faithful*, whom he will imploy to deſtroy the beaſt.

2. The Vials are now pouring out on the Roman ſtate; and the reformed Churches, ſo far as they hold of *Rome* ſhall have a ſprinkling of thoſe Vials. The Lord ſaith in *Heb.* 12.27. *Yet once more will I ſhake not the earth only, but alſo heaven.* For what end are all theſe concuſſions of Kingdoms and States? *That the things that are ſhaken may be removed, as things that are made, and that the things that cannot be ſhaken may remain*, not be deſtroyed. Now the reformed Churches are deſcribed, *Rev.* 15. 3. *Standing upon the ſea of glaſs mingled with fire, as thoſe who had gotten the victory over the Beaſt.*

3. God hath a holy people here, that will take root. *Iſa.* 4. 3, 4. *It ſhall come to paſs, that he that is left in* Zion, *and he that remaineth in* Jeruſalem *ſhall be called holy, even every one that is written to life in* Jeruſalem, *when the Lord ſhall have waſhed away the filth of the daughters of* Zion, *and ſhall have purged the blood of* Jeruſalem *from the midſt thereof, by the ſpirit of judgement, and by the ſpirit of burning.* There was a temporal judgement that ſwept away many, but ſome were written to life. Who were they? the holy ones. Theſe when the Nation is as a tree that caſteth its leaves, even the holy ſeed ſhall be the ſubſtance of the tree, *Iſa.* 6. 13. their ſtanding is in the holy ſeed, which the Lord reſerves to be a ſeminary of holineſs: from all this we have ground to hope, that God hath yet an intention to be reconciled to this Nation.

Queſt. 2. Who muſt do it? But who are the perſons, that muſt be imployed in this work?

Anſw. God requires it of a whole Nation. It is a work of difficulty and a daring ſervice. When God is offended, and a man ſhall dare to put himſelf into the place of an Umpire between God and a Nation. God requires a whole Nation to do it. *Joel* 2. 15, 16. *Blow the trumpet in* Sion, *ſanctifie a faſt, call a ſolemn aſſembly. Gather the people, ſanctifie the Congregation: aſſemble the Elders, gather the children and thoſe that ſuck the breaſt. Let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her cloſet. Let the Prieſts, the Miniſters of the Lord, ſtand between the Porch and the Altar, and let them ſay, ſpare thy people, O Lord.* God requires, *that every one ſhould turn from the violence of his hands.* So in *Zach.* 12. 11, 12. *In that day there ſhall be a great mourning in* Jeruſalem, *as the mourning of* Hadadrimmon *in the valley of* Megiddon. *And the land ſhall mourn, every family a part*; you will ſay, the godly of the Nation indeed are like the ſap at the root of the tree, that will make it to flouriſh again: but what can be expected from the ungodly of the Nation, thoſe that have no intereſt in God? nothing, but to provide for themſelves, to ſhift for one, all that can be expected of them, is to fly. For a man to ſtand in the gap when a breach is made, is a deſperate ſervice: but God expects it from his Saints. You that are the bleſſing of the earth, and by whoſe Covenant a Nation ſtands; it becomes you to be Mediators for a Nation: wonder not at the phraſe. *Moſes* was ſo: *The Law was ordained by Angels in the hand of a Mediator*, Gal. 3. 19. *Moſes* was a national Mediator, a typical Mediator, and you may obſerve how much God delights to make his people Mediators. In *Gen.* 20. 6, 7. A judgement was come upon *Abimelech*, and God would remove it, but whom would he gratifie? why ſaith God, *Abraham is a Prophet he ſhall pray for thee.* So *Jobs* friends, when Gods wrath was kindled againſt them, the Lord ſaith, Job *ſhall pray for you, him will I accept, leſt I deal with you according to your folly*, Job 42. 8. And to this end the Saints ſtand in the ſame relation to God under the Goſpel, as the Prieſt did under the Law. The Prieſt only had acceſs to God, a type not only of Chriſt perſonal, but of Chriſt typical, they are an holy

Eſpecially of the Saints.

holy Prieſthood. All the mercies vouchſafed to a Nation, God beſtows them on his own people: and for their ſakes: whether in ſparing mercy, or in bounty. When God was provoked againſt *Iſrael*, who is the man that muſt ſtand between him and the people, but *Moſes*? if God ſpare *Zoar*, who ſhall obtain it, but *Lot*? in the time of *Marcus Aurelius*, who ſhould procure rain from heaven, but the Chriſtians? Many receive the benefit of the mercy, but it is done with reſpect to the Saints. You have an intereſt in God, and he will do great things for you. God ſaith of you, *I will give men for thee, and people for thy life. I gave* Egypt *for thy ranſom*, Ethiopia *and* Seba *for thee*, Iſa. 43. 3, 4. When great judgements are threatned, *for the elects ſake they are ſhortned*, Matth. 24. All the good beſtowed on the earth, is for the Saints ſake. When *Paul* was in the Ship, God ſpared the lives of all the reſt. How came it to paſs? Why ſaith God, *I have given thee the lives of all that ſail with thee*, Acts 27. 24. If you prevail not with God to make up the breach, that people are in a helpleſs condition. If *Noah*, *Daniel* and *Job* cannot prevail, none will, *Ezek.* 14. This is the duty and property of all the people of God, where ever they are; and the people of God being of publick ſpirits, do delight to draw out their ſpirits in this work. *I have ſet watchmen upon thy walls, O* Jeruſalem, *which ſhall never hold their peace, day nor night: ye that be the Lords remembrancers, keep not ſilence*, Iſa. 62. 6. See how *Moſes* his ſpirit riſeth; *yet now if thou wilt, forgive their ſin, and if not, blot me out of thy book*, Exod. 32. 32. And again, *If thy preſence go not with me, carry us not up hence*, Exod. 33. 15. It is a glorious expreſſion, that of *Hezekiah* in his meſſage to the Prophet *Iſaiah*, chap. 37. 3, 4. *The children are come to the birth, and there is not ſtrength to bring forth.* The decree of mercy was come to the birth, and *Hezekiah* calls to the Prophet to help now, to do the office of a Midwife. *Lift up a prayer for the remnant that is left.* It is your duty and office to labour to make reconciliation between God and a Nation. But what muſt theſe do?

If they prevail not, none elſe can.

Queſt. 3. What muſt they do?

Anſ.

There be ſix things, that God expects from you in this work.

1. Mourn for the ſins & judgements of the land.

Firſt, God requires of you, that you mourn for the ſins, and

and be deeply humbled under and affected with the judgements of God upon the land. This Mediators have done in time paſt. Thus did *Moſes*, Exod. 32. 31. And *Moſes* returned unto the Lord and ſaid: *Oh, this people have ſinned a great ſin.* The people had made a Calfe, and God had made a great ſlaughter among them. *Moſes* comes as a Mediator to intercede, and how doth he do it? he comes to the Lord and ſays, oh! this people have ſinned a great ſin, and have made them gods of gold. *Daniel* becomes a Mediator for the people of the Jews, *and he ſets his face unto the Lord God, to ſeek by prayer and faſting, and ſackcloth and aſhes*, Dan. 9. 3. And in *chap.* 10 2, 3. *He is mourning three full weeks, and did eat no pleaſant bread.* *Nehemiah* though he were the Kings Cup-bearer, yet his countenance was ſad in remembrance of the ruine come upon his people. Thus *Ezra*, when he heard of the ſin of the people, *He rent his garment, and his mantle, and pluckt off the hair of his head and of his beard, and ſate down aſtonied: and at the evening ſacrifice he riſeth up from his mourning, and fell upon his knees and ſpread out his hands unto the Lord his God*, Ezra. 9. 3, 5. See how deeply he was affected with the ſin of the Nation, and likewiſe with the judgements on the Nation in the following part of the Chapter. In *Jer.* 14. 7. there was a national Mediator, and what doth he ſay? *Oh Lord, though our iniquities teſtifie againſt us, do thou it for thy names ſake: for our backſlidings are many, we have ſinned againſt thee.* And ſo *Micah* 1. 8. *I will wail and howl, I will go ſtript and naked: I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls: her wound is incureable: it is come to* Judah: *he is come to the gate of my people, even to* Jeruſalem. He ſpeaks of the judgement. All that are national Mediators, muſt be thus deeply affected with the ſins of the Nation, and the judgements on them for ſin: and therein take notice of three particulars.

1. Be affected anſwerable to the diſpenſation of every Attribute of God.

1. God expects from you, that you ſhould be affected anſwerable to the diſpenſation of every Attribute of his. The Lord ſhews forth ſeveral Atttibutes in their ſeaſons: ſometimes mercy and ſometimes juſtice: and as he expects you ſhould be affected with the diſpenſations of his mercy; ſo of his juſtice too, you that know the mercy of the Lord, he looks

that

that you ſhould rejoyce in his mercy; you that know the terror of the Lord, you ſhould tremble and perſwade men.

2. You ſhould be ſo much affected with it, as that it ſhould imbitter to you all the comforts of your life, even the choiceſt comforts. *Nehemiah* did no more then his duty, when he ſtood before the King and wanted nothing, and yet he was ſad. *Daniel* did eat no bread that was pleaſant to him. Conſult that Scripture, *Exod.* 33. 5. *Put off thine ornaments from thee.* Deny your ſelves of your comforts. *Cut off thine hair, O* Jeruſalem, *Jer.* 7. 29. What is the meaning? it is to deny her ſelf of all thoſe common comforts, ornaments and contentments. One that ſhall come to the Lord to ingage on the behalf of his Church, as *Moſes* did, *Exod.* 32. 32. would not think much to lay down a few outward comforts. There is a myſtery in Providence. God doth many times afford men great increaſe of outward comforts in the time of the Churches calamity, and makes great offers to them, and what is it for? he tries the ſincerity of their heart, and many are bribed by them. *Moſes* intercedes for the people, *Let me alone ſaith God, and I will make of thee a great Nation.* What was Gods intent? was it to deſtroy them? no, but to try *Moſes* ſincerity, whether he would be bribed. God hath a controverſie with many among us, I fear, for this.

2. It ſhould imbitter all your comforts.

3. When you mourn, God hath a great reſpect to a Kingdom for your ſakes. *I will reſtore comfort to him,* ſaith God, *and to his mourners,* Iſa. 57. 18. God ſeems to ſpeak it, as of a particular perſon: but if you compare it with *ver.* 15, 16. you will find it to have reſpect to the whole Nation. There were ſome national Mediators, that mourned for the iniquity of the land. I will, ſaith God, reſtore comfort to him and to his mourners; that is to the Nation and thoſe who mourned for the tranſgreſſions of it. So he ſaith, *In my wrath I ſmote thee, but in my favour have I had compaſſion on thee,* Iſa. 60. 10. and in *ver.* 20. *the dayes of thy mourning ſhall be ended.* God under the Law *hated the bread of mourners,* Hoſ. 9. 4. but ſuch mourning as this is very acceptable to God.

3. God reſpects a Kingdom for your mourning.

Secondly, God requires of you, that would be Mediators for a Nation, that you ſhould keep your ſelves from national defilements. Be not you entangled with thoſe evils that defile

2. God requires you ſhould be Mediators for a Nation.

file the Nation, and bring judgements on it, take heed you keep your garments, *Rev.* 16. 15. And here take notice of three things.

1. Such must be free from national sins.

1. Remember, a man shall not be preserved himself in a national affliction, unless he be free from national sins. *Noah*, that was saved when all the world was drowned, *he was a just man, and perfect in his generation, and walked with God*, Gen. 6. 9. *Lot*, that was preserved in the destruction of *Sodom*, *was a righteous man that vexed his righteous soul with the unclean conversation of the Sodomites*, 2 Pet. 2. 8. There are some *written to life in* Jerusalem, Isa. 4. but who were they? the holy in the land: if you be not so, you will not be saved in the common calamity.

2. They must be the most holy in the Nation.

2. Remember, all those persons that have been powerful with God for a Kingdom, have been the most holy in that Nation. Two you have in *Jer.* 15. 1. *Moses*, and *Samuel*: and three more in *Ezek.* 14. *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job*; these were persons of the greatest holiness, and these were most like to prevail. Of all sins, God can least bear with the provocations of sons and of daughters, and if you should be guilty of such, instead of turning away judgements, you may bring them. One *Jonah*, though a godly man, brings a storm, and was like to bring destruction upon a whole ship: you had need then be very holy. For,

3. Such must be much in obedience.

3. The less obedience and sanctity there is in your lives, the less efficacy there will be in your prayers. A man that will prevail with God, *must lift up pure hands, without wrath or doubting*. *Moses* was a man that had great power with God; but *he spake unadvisedly with his lips*, and what saith *Moses*? *the Lord was angry with me for your sakes, and would not hear me*.

Obedience is threefold.

The success of prayer indeed, doth not depend on the holiness that is in us, but on the gracious love of God, and intercession of Christ: but the spirit of sanctification only, is the spirit of supplication, and the best ground you have to believe God hears your prayer: and therefore the more holiness and obedience is to be found in you, the more are you like to prevail. Now there are three degrees of obedience.

1. *Obedientia*

1. *Obedientia voti*, the obedience of desire, when though a man comes short in his actions, yet his desire answers the rule. 1. Of desire.

2. An obedience of conformity, when a mans actions in some measure answer the rule: and that is a high degree of obedience. 2. Of conformity

3. An obedience of resignation, when a mans will is perfectly given up to God, and it is his delight to obey him: and the higher pitch you attain unto in any of these, the more powerful will your prayers be. 3. Of resignation

Thirdly, If you will be Mediators for a people, you must be much in supplication for them: it is standing in the gap. *Moses* did so: and how doth he do it? he sets to prayer. So doth *Amos*, *Oh Lord God! forgive I beseech thee.* And he is at it again and again, *Amos* 7. 2, 5. Judgements come against the Nation, and *Amos* falls a praying. *By whom shall* Jacob *arise, for he is small? oh Lord God forgive, I beseech thee.* And God repented for this; it shall not be saith the Lord. And here, 3. Such must be much in supplication for them.

1. Remember, God hath subjected all the Nations of the world to the prayers of his people, his Saints. *Ask of me concerning my sons, and concerning the works of my hands, command ye me*, Isa. 45. 11. Here be two things prayer hath power over; Matters of common providence, the works of his hands, and matters concerning the Church, concerning my sons: and God hath subjected both of these to the prayers of his Saints. God hath subjected a special and common providences to the prayers of his Saints.

2. Be much in prayer, because if this prevail not for a Nation, there is no hope. *Amos* prayes three several times for the people, in the seventh of his Prophesie. Twice God had harkned, and repented of the evil; but in his prayer at last, God shews himself to him with a plumb-line in his hand, and he saith, *Behold I will set a plumb-line in the midst of my people* Israel, *and I will not pass by them any more*, ver. 8. If prayer prevail not, nothing will: but surely the prayers of a few may prevail. *Moses* stood alone as an intercessor, and turns away Gods wrath. *Daniel* alone procures deliverance for his people. *Hezekiah* sends to *Isaiah*, and tells him, the children of the promise were come to the birth, but there was not 2. If their prayers prevail not there is no hope.

ſtrength to bring forth, therefore ſaith he, lift up thy prayer. And as one ſaith well, *Nemo parvi pendat orationem ſuam, nam priuſquam exceſſit à labio noſtro, Deus jubet inſcribi in libro ſuo*, Let no child of God undervalue or ſet light by his prayers, for before they come out of our lips God writes them down in his book. The prayers of the Saints have great efficacy, and if that will not do, there is no means to recover a dying people.

3. Prayer that prevails for a dying Nation muſt be,

3. The prayer that ſhall prevail for a dying Nation, muſt have theſe three qualities.

1. Humble.

1. It muſt be humble. Such as was *Abrahams*, when he intercedes for *Sodom*. *Behold, I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto my Lord, that am but duſt and aſhes*, Gen. 18. 27. *Moſes* and *Joſhua* fall upon their faces. *Elijah* puts his head between his knees, it notes both a humble and fervent poſture.

2. Fiducial.

2. It muſt be a fiducial prayer. You muſt act faith mightily, if you will prevail in ſuch a caſe as this. When *Moſes* comes to pray, ſee what arguments of faith he uſeth. *Wherefore ſhould the Egyptians ſpeak and ſay, for miſchief did he bring them out?* *Remember* Abraham, Iſaac *and* Iſrael, *thy ſervants to whom thou ſwareſt. Forgive them Lord as thou haſt ſaid: and if not, blot me (I pray thee) out of thy book which thou haſt written.* Thus it muſt be with your prayers whoſoever will prevail.

3. Conſtant.

3. It muſt be conſtant, continual prayer. *Moſes* ſaith of himſelf, and *I fell down before the Lord as at the firſt* (he had been already at the work, but he comes to it again) *forty dayes and forty nights I did neither eat bread nor drink water, becauſe of all your ſins*, Deut. 9. 18. When God had laid the buſineſs of the Nation to heart, he reſolved to wreſtle it out with God. A man ſhould follow God as *Moſes* did, *Lord pardon their ſin*, ſaith *Moſes*. I have, ſaith God, will that ſatisfie? no ſaith *Moſes*, *let thy preſence go with us*; it ſhall ſaith God, will that ſerve? no ſaith *Moſes*, *own them for thy people*; *conſider that this Nation is thy people, and wherein ſhall it be known here, that I and thy people have found grace in thy ſight*? When prayers are thus made by the Saints, God ſometimes gives them the lives, and ſometimes the ſouls of others; the lives of others, ſo he did to *Paul*. *God hath given thee all that ſail with*

with thee, ſaith the Angel, *Acts* 27. 24. and ſometimes their ſouls. How many ſouls were converted in anſwer to the prayer of *Stephen*, *Lord lay not this ſin to their charge*?

Fourthly, if you would be Mediators, lay hold on Chriſt for the Nation. Jeſus Chriſt is a national Mediator as well as perſonal: and there is no way to reconcile a Nation, but by him. One man may lay hold on Chriſt for another. *Jeſus ſeeing their faith*, (that is the faith of them that brought him who was ſick) *he ſaid unto the ſick of the palſie*, *Son*, *thy ſins be forgiven thee*, Mark 2. 5. God often-times diſpenceth temporal mercies to one man, for the faith of another. *Solatia hujus vitæ conferuntur fide alienâ, æterna noſtrâ.* You may then lay hold on Chriſt for a Nation; but how ſhould you do it? Obſerve it in three things. 1. To lay hold on Chriſt for a Nation, is, for a man by an eye of faith to look on Jeſus Chriſt, as he for whom the world ſtands. *I have given thee*, ſaith God, *for a Covenant to the people to eſtabliſh the earth*, Iſa. 49. 8. And then, 2. Look on Chriſt as he by whom the world is governed, and for that we muſt rejoyce. *The Lord reigneth*, *let the earth rejoyce*, Pſalm 97. 1. The world is in the hand of a Mediator. And then, 3. Look on the interceſſion of Chriſt, as that which is effectual for a Nation, as well as for a perſon. *Zach.* 1. 12. You have Chriſt interceding for the Nation, ſaying, *O Lord God of hoſts*, *how long wilt thou not have mercy on* Jeruſalem *and on the Cities of* Judah, *againſt which thou haſt had indignation theſe threeſcore and ten years*? So *Daniel*, when he begs a national mercy, he doth it *for the Lords ſake*; *Now therefore*, *O our God*, *hear the prayer of thy ſervant and his ſupplications: and cauſe thy face to ſhine upon thy ſanctuary*, *which is deſolate*, *for the Lords ſake*, Dan. 9. 17. That is the way for you to prevail for a Nation, lay hold on Jeſus Chriſt for the Nation.

4. Such may lay hold on Chriſt for the Nation.

5. Such must administer Justice impartially.

Fifthly, Justice must be impartially executed in that Nation, which would have reconciliation wrought between God and them. *Psalm* 47. 9. Magistrates are called, *Scuta terræ, the shields of the earth*; not only to defend them from the violence of men, but from the vengeance of God. Phineas *stood up and executed judgement, and the plague was stayed*, Psalm 106. 30. ויפלל and he executed judgement, or he prayed, the word signifies both. That which is required of a particular man, is, that his holy walking should follow his prayers, or else they will not be effectual. And so of a Magistrate, God requires his execution of Justice should follow his prayers; else you will have the answer which *Joshua* had, *Judg.* 7. *Up, why lyest thou upon thy face?* Israel *hath sinned.*

Quest. You will say, what is the execution of Justice? on what must Justice be done?

Answ. 1. On such as have shed blood.

Do you make inquisition for blood. God will, and so should you. There be two Scriptures that shew how much blood sticks with God; one is, *Numb.* 35. 31. *Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death, but he shall be surely put to death.* And *ver.* 33. *Blood defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.* The other is that in *Deut.* 21. 6, 7, 8. in the case of one who is found slain in the field: *All the elders of that City, which is next unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley, and shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Be merciful, O Lord, unto thy people* Israel, *whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people* Israels *charge.*

2. On blasphemers and incorrigible false teachers.

2. Do justice on blasphemers & incorrigible false teachers. Consider, whether these doctrines be to be born. That one shall say, he is God. Another, that the resurrection

ction is paſt, and the Saints are as perfect as ever they ſhall be, and this is to ſee the face of God. Remember *Job* 31.28. *This is ſaid to be an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judge, to deny the God above.* It is a maxim laid down by *Mariana* the Jeſuite, *Princeps nil ſtatuat de Religione*, that the Magiſtrate ſhould not meddle in matters of Religion. It is a Prophecy of Goſpel-times, that in *Zach.* 13. See how falſe teachers ſhould be uſed. *And it ſhall come to paſs, that when any ſhall yet Prophecy* (that is, Preach falſe things; ſo the context clears it) *then his father and his mother that begat him, ſhall ſay unto him, Thou ſhalt not live, for thou ſpeakeſt lyes in the name of the Lord: and his father and his mother that begat him, ſhall thruſt him through when he propheſieth.* Dead Laws, what are they? God expects Magiſtrates ſhould be living Laws.

Laſtly, Unite your prayers. *If two of you ſhall agree on earth*, as touching any thing that they ſhall ask, *it ſhall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven*, Matth. 18. 19. If two or three agree συμφωνήσωσιν, *ſing one ſong.* In our prayers we are at diſcord: there muſt be an union of hearts and union of votes. Union of hearts, do not betray your prayers, by your diviſions, rage and violence. Union of votes, *ſerving the Lord with one ſhoulder*, Zeph. 3. 9. There muſt be a conſent in your petitions. *Chryſoſtom* obſerves, *Plus impetrari poſſit paucorum concordi prece, quam multorum diſcordi*, more may be obtained by the prayer of a few agreeing therein, then by the jarring petitions of many: this hath much hindred the efficacy of our prayers, and hath cauſed ſo many Faſt-dayes to return into our boſoms in vain. This is the courſe to be taken to reconcile God and the Nation; and if you who are the people of God, his Saints, do ſeriouſly and heartily engage in this work, remember for your incouragement, how kindly God took it of *Phineas*, when he turned away Gods wrath, it was imputed to him for righteouſneſs. It is the greateſt ſervice you can be imployed in, and the greateſt talent you were ever intruſted with: improve it. Remember, what *Mordecai* ſaid to *Heſter*, *If thou altogether hold your peace at this time, ſalvation and deliverance ſhall come ſome other way, but thou and thy fathers houſe ſhall periſh*, even

6. Such muſt unite their prayers.

when God ſhall deliver the Nation. And if ever he do it, we muſt expect it in this way. We ſhall never be reconciled one to another in a way of mercy, till it be given in as a fruit of our reconciliation with God: and that will be an act of great mercy, which is the next thing in the text, when God re-unites a divided people, he ſaid, Behold I will take the ſtick of *Joſeph*, which is in the hand of *Ephraim*, and the Tribes of *Iſrael* his fellows, and I will put them with him even with the ſtick of *Judah*, and make them one ſtick, and they ſhall be one in my hand.

Why this union is reſembled by two ſticks made one.

Why doth the Lord reſemble theſe by two ſticks? I conceive it is by way of alluſion to that in *Numb.* 17. 2, 3. where God requires the head of every Tribe to bring a rod or ſtick, and to write every ones name upon his rod. In alluſion to this, the Lord here mentions the ſtick of *Joſeph* in the hand of *Ephraim*, and the ſtick of *Judah*, repreſenting the two ruling Tribes after the diviſion: and God ſaith, he will undertake the work to make theſe two ſticks to become one: the breach between them had been of long continuance, and heightned by much violence, and though it laſt to this day, yet God undertakes to reconcile them. How ſhall it be done? To ſee dry bones live and gather together into an army, is a miraculous work. So it is for two ſticks *coaleſcere*, to grow into one. It is no leſs, that is the tydings you hear of, *Dan.* 11. 44. *Tidings out of the Eaſt and out of the North ſhall trouble him.* When the Turk ſhall hear theſe dry bones begin to live and to gather into a body, this news ſhall trouble him: but how ſhall this be done? it is a miraculous work: why ſaith God; Behold my people, I will open your graves. And ſo here, I will make them one, and they ſhall be one in my hand: it notes, *præpotentiſſimas & gratioſiſſimas operationes.* An act of the greateſt power, and an act of the freeſt grace. An act of power. So *Iſa.* 11. 11. *And it ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the Lord ſhall ſet his hand again the ſecond time, to recover the remnant of his people which ſhall be left from* Aſſyria, *and from* Egypt, *and from* Pathros, *and from* Cuſh, *and from* Elam, *and from* Shinar, *and from* Hamath, *and from the Iſlands of the Sea.* He will ſet to his hand, he will put forth his power. And an act of grace it ſhall be too. In *Iſa.* 25. 10.

In

In this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest. The hand of the Lord, that is his gracious presence, it shall not be for a day or a night, but it shall rest there. This work shall be done by a mighty act of Gods power and goodness. When their divisions are greatest and widest, then the Lord saith, Behold I will take them, I will put them together, and make them one, and they shall be one in mine hand. Then surely the Lord would have his hand observed in it, and it shall be really so. The same God that brake the staffe of bands, shall put them together again and make them one: there is not the greatest breach in the world, but God can make up. Though it be a staffe of bands, let them be the strongest cords of love and amity in the world, if God put his hand to break them, they will be broken: and let the breach be never so wide, if God will heal it, it shall be done.

When God unites divided brethren, they shall become truely one: and he will have only his grace and his power to be acknowledged in it. *Doct.* 3.

There be three branches of the doctrine, all of very necessary concernment to us.

1. When the Lord doth unite a divided people, they shall be one.

2. When he doth it, he doth it by a mighty work of his power and grace.

3. When he doth it, he would have his hand seen and acknowledged in it.

1. When God unites a people they shall be one.

First, let a people be never so much divided, yet when God will make them one, they shall be one. The re-union of a divided people is their restitution. It is a glorious Scripture, that in *Hos.* 1. 11. *Then shall the children of* Judah, *and the children of* Israel *be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up from out of the land, for great shall be the day of* Jezreel. *Jezreel*, who is that? in *ver.* 4. he calleth one degree of their judgement by that name, *Jezreel*. One scattered by God: this scattered people the Lord saith, there is a glorious day coming for them, when this people shall be united. It refers to the time here spoken of, they shall draw together and appoint them one head. Whensoever the Lord doth thus unite a people, they shall be one. So

look

look into *Isa.* 26. 12. *Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us.* תשפת the word שפת there used, signifies to order a thing within its bounds, and our Interpreters render it, *basi stabilire firma*, to settle, to establish peace on a firm basis. Thou shalt ordain peace for us. The Ordinances of heaven keep their course, because God ordained them. Would we have our peace more firm? I will extend peace to thee as a river, *Isa.* 66. 12. It notes *abundantiam*, thy peace shall be in abundance, as there is water in a river: and it notes *irresistibilitatem*, nothing shall be able to resist it. As *Isa.* 8. 7. The hostile invasion of the enemy, is resembled to the breaking in of a flood, the waters of the river strong and many, he shall overflow and go over, there is no keeping of it out. If God ordain peace, it shall be peace indeed. Men may take two sticks, and tye them together, or glew them together, but that will not make them one stick. Men may fancy to themselves a peace: yea men may become false Prophets to themselves, as they did, *Jer.* 14. 13. *The Prophets say unto them, ye shall not see the sword, but I will give you assured peace in this place.* God was bringing a judgement, and they promised them peace, but it proved not so, for in *ver.* 29. they say, *we looked for peace, and there is no good, and for healing, but behold trouble.* But when the Lord will put to his hand, the two sticks shall become one in his hand.

Quest. But what doth God do when he settles a sure peace?

Answ. When God doth unite a people. He makes good that promise, *Jer* 32. 39. *I will give them one heart and one way.* When God makes a peace for a people, he doth this for them, and then they become one indeed; a peace of your making will never make you one.

1. He gives them one heart, that is, 1. God will give them one heart: that is first, one judgement, that you may *mind the same things*, Phil. 3. 16. their judgements shall concur. That is our misery, difference of mens judgements in reformed Churches: it is a sea of glass mingled with fire. It is our fault indeed, yet it falls out so usually, we can hardly close in affections with them, with whom we do not close in apprehensions. This God will cure by giving one heart. And,

1. One Judgement.

2. One will. 2. One heart, that is one will. That great and glorious Lord, who would have an accord in a family, would have but one

one will there. He saith of the wife, *thy will shall be to thine husband.* And,

3. By having one heart, they shall have the same affections: that is the rule, *be kindly affectioned one towards another*, and it will be the frame. Now what one loves, another hates: what one hates another loves; but when God gives his people one heart, then men shall affect the same things and act the same things, minde the things that make for peace. Thus God will do, when he returns to a people in mercy to reconcile them. The ground of division is the same among us, as it was with *Israel, their heart is divided*, Hos. 10. 2. And the promise is in *Isa.* 11. *the envy of* Ephraim *shall depart*; When once they come to have one heart: that is not all: But,

3. The same affections.

2. God will give them one way too. 1. They *shall speak the same things*, as well as mind the same things. This the Apostle prayes for, *that you may with one mind and with one mouth glorifie God*, Rom. 15. 6. Many men intend the same things, but make a great deal of difference, because they do not speak the same things. When one speaks the language of *Canaan*, another the language of *Ashdod*, this makes division. 2. They shall act the same things in the service of God. *In that day there shall be one Lord, and his name shall be one*, Zach. 14. 9. uniformity in this were to be desired. But while the smoak in the Temple lasts, and there is a great deal of darkness, this cannot be well discovered; there will come a time when God will unite all his people in this. And as they shall act the same in the things of God; so in the things that concern themselves. Now the divisions of *Reuben* cause great thoughts of heart; but the time will come, when you shall serve the Lord with one shoulder, *Zeph.* 3. 9. I find in an Epistle of *Clemens Romanus*, a pattern both for a Church and a State. You read that in the Primitive times, Christians were of one heart and of one soul: and that author gives an account of it. It lay in these things.

2. He gives them one way.

1. They shall speak the same things.

2. Act the same things.

Unity of heart in the primitive times, wherein it consisted.

1. Every man in his proper place and condition did yeild universal obedience to the Word. It is in a State and a Church, as in a body natural, if one member be dislocated, the rest will be the less able to perform their office.

2. They did all things without partiality and respect of persons. You have the rule, *James* 2. 1. *My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.* We may conjecture the contention between *Paul* and *Barnabas* had not rise so high, had not *Mark* been *Barnabas* sisters son.

3. Every one was content with the estate and present condition they were in. When men are not content with that pitch of honour that they have, but they love to have the preheminence, hence come divisions: when men are not content with those estates they have, this occasions contentions.

4. They were one, because every one did chuse rather to obey then to rule. The Apostles exhortation and counsel is, *My brethren, be not many Masters*, James 3. 1. this masterly disposition hurles confusion over the world; till this be taken away, never expect peace.

5. They were men that did forbear and forgive one another, according to that rule, *Col.* 3. 12, 13. *Put on therefore (as the elect of God holy and beloved) bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering: forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as God for Christs sake forgave you, so also do ye.*

6. They did as truly pray for the whole brotherhood, and weep for their failings, as for themselves and their own. When we shall see such dispositions as these wrought in divided brethren; we may truly say, they are made one. A man may take two sticks and tye them together: but they will not hold so long; the artifice will wear off: but to make them grow into one, this is a work for God; and when he doth it, it shall be so. That is the first thing.

2. When God doth thus unite a people, he puts forth a special act of power and grace. It is by an act of Almighty power. *I form the light and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil*, Isa. 45. 7. God creates peace: if you look over all the world, you will not see any thing out of which he should make it, therefore he must create it: it is a work of omnipotent power. Nay, *he speaks peace unto the heathen*,

2. When God unites a people, he puts forth.

1. An act of Almighty power.

Zach

Zach. 9. 10. As he did ſpeak all the creatures at firſt. *Let there be light and there was light:* ſo, let there be peace and there ſhall be peace. It is a great act of power, if you conſider how oppoſite the intereſts, and how impetuous the luſts of men are: they are cruel, vindicative, *better meet a bear robbed of her whelps*, then a man is in his luſt. If you look to the birds of prey, the Nimrods of the earth, it is revenge they thirſt and ſeek after. It is ſpoken of Antichriſt, *Dan.* 11. 38. *In his eſtate ſhall he honour the God of forces, a God whom his Father knew not. Mauzzim*, a God of force or power, a God that advanced their power moſt. When God promiſeth, the wolfe ſhall lye down with the Lamb, and the Leopard with the Kid: it is ſpoken of that work which God would do, when the envy of *Ephraim* ſhould depart, God would put forth an act of Almighty power in changing their natures, take away that contrariety and enmity that was in their natures: and it had need be an Almighty power, if you conſider the ſpirit that acts theſe luſts, the wind that blows them up. You read of a great army of Locuſts, *Rev.* 9. and who was their Captain? who was it that tranſacted all the rage and violence? *ver.* 11. *They had a King over them, which is the Angel of the bottomleſs pit:* they were acted by Satan. And when in *Rev.* 20. God gives a command to bind up Satan, it is to reſtrain him from ſtirring up men to war againſt the Saints. The power of God is mightily ſeen in binding up the luſts of men and the power of Satan. And then it is an act of ſpecial grace: it is promiſed as ſuch, *I will make with them a Covenant of peace*: the Covenant of Grace is a Covenant of peace, *Ezek.* 34. 25. *I will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth*, Jer. 33. 6. Revelation is of a thing hidden; when you are in the dark about ſpiritual things, and the Lord reveals them to you, is it not an act of ſpecial grace? There is abundance of peace for the people of God laid up, but it is not revealed, nor the way to it. Some read the word, *aperiam*, I will open unto them abundance of peace. There be treaſures, but they be locked up: and when God opens the treaſures of truth, he will alſo open the treaſures of peace. Peace is a gift as well as grace. It is a ſtrange prayer the Apoſtle makes, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 16. *The Lord*

2. An act of ſpecial grace.

of peace himself give you peace always, by all means: he prayes for their peace, but who must give it? the Lord of peace himself must give it. It is a mighty act of grace, but wherein doth the greatness of the favour lye?

Quest.

Ans. 1. In that it is a removal of the greatest misery.

1. Consider the oppofite, contrary misery: the greatest misery in the world, one of Gods great and sore plagues is war. God makes three moneths flying before an enemy, equal to seven years famine; in the choice he sends to *David*: when the sword is sent, it is bathed in heaven, *Isa.* 34. 5. and when the war is ended, the sword is sheathed there.

2. It shall end in the enemies destruction.

2. When God makes peace, the war shall end in the enemies destruction. When God comes to rest in his mountain of *Israel*, *Moab shall be troden down under him, even as straw is troden down for the dunghill*, Isa. 25. 10. And in *Rev.* 19. when the Saints follow Christ in white, tokens of peace and triumph, then Christ appears in garments died in blood, the blood of his enemies.

3. Christ shall be entertained for their King.

3. When God makes peace for a people, Christ shall be entertained for their King; so it is promised here, David *my servant shall be King over them.*

4. There shall be abundance of righteousness.

4. When God makes peace for a people, there shall be abundance of righteousness with it. *Zach.* 8. 16. *These are the things that ye shall do, speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour, execute the judgement of truth and peace in your gates.*

5. All other prosperity shall follow.

Lastly, when God thus makes peace, all other prosperity will then follow. *When peace is within the walls, prosperity will be within the Palaces*, Psal. 122. 7. And all this makes it an act of great grace. So that if you lay all these together, you will perceive when God sets his hand to the work, peace and reconciliation shall be made, and it is an act of great power and especial grace.

Thirdly, when God doth this, he will have it taken notice of, that it is done by him. *That they may know from the rising of the Sun and from the West, that there is none besides me: I am the Lord, and there is none else. I make peace and create evil*, Isa. 45. 6. God will bring you to see it: and he will break all your wayes of policy, till you come to see, that God and God only can make the two sticks to become one.

We

We come now to the laſt particular in the Text. The Lord will do this, but what is the condition of this people, when God comes to unite them? It is ſet forth by a double reſemblance, to be hopeleſs and helpleſs in reſpect of humane concurrence. They are dry bones. To ſee the ſpirit depart from a man, and he laid up in his grave, you will ſay there is little hope of his life; but to ſee the fleſh conſumed, and bones dryed, and ſcattered up and down, there appears leſs ground of hope that theſe ſhould come together and unite. And when the people take notice of this, and ſay, Our bones are dried, our hope is loſt, and we are cut off for our parts; Then and not till then God ſaith, Behold O my people, I will open your graves, and cauſe you to come up out of your graves. And thence we obſerve,

Long diviſions among brethren God ſeldom heals, till both parties are brought very low, and all humane hope paſt. This we ſhall clear in theſe four particulars. *Doct.* 4.

1. Though the Lords title be, *Jehovah that healeth thee*, Exod. 15. 26. Yet God ſeldom appears to heal the wounds of his people, till they be deſperate, and in the eye of fleſh incurable. He will not appear for the people of *Iſrael* ſo eminently, till they be in the red Sea: nor for the three children, till in the fiery furnace: nor for *Daniel*, till in the den of Lions. When all hope is paſt, then is the time for Omnipotency to come in. It was Gods honour of old, *Gen.* 22. 14. *In the mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen*: in the mount, in times of extremity, when all humane probability and poſſibility is gone. You have two glorious inſtances of it. God brings the people of *Iſrael* into a deſolate wilderneſs, where ſhall they have bread? they can look for none but from heaven. Where ſhall they have water? When God hath brought his people into a wilderneſs, then is it a time for the heavens to ſhower down bread, and the rock to pour out water. Nor was it for that time only, but he ſaith, *Hoſ.* 2. 14. *I will allure and bring her into the wilderneſs, and ſpeak comfortably unto her.* Another glorious expreſſion you have, *Hoſ.* 14. 4. *I will heal their backſlidings: I will love them freely.* When was this? when they had ſaid in the former verſe, *with thee the Fatherleſs find mercy.* When his

Cleared in four particulars.

1. God ſeldom heals the wounds of a people, till they be deſperate.

people are as Orphans, that have none to ſupply their wants, none to avenge their wrongs, none to look unto, but the Father of the fatherleſs, nothing within them that hath *rationem boni*, nothing without them that hath *rationem auxilii*, then is a time for God to appear.

2. Till they have tried all other wayes.

2. The Lord doth uſually let men try all wayes and means they can find out by their own wiſdom, or accompliſh by their own power, and doth often nip the faireſt bloſſoms of their endeavours, and then he works himſelf. Nothing is more natural, then for men to betake themſelves to creatures: if they need ſupply, they go to theſe, if they have wounds to be cured, hence they expect the balm. So *Hoſ.* 5. 13. *When* Ephraim *ſaw his ſickneſs, and* Judah *his wound: then went* Ephraim *to the* Aſſyrian, *and ſent to King* Jareb. There be different conjectures of Interpreters about that word *Jareb*: ſome take it for a name given to the King of *Aſſyria*: the word ſignifies *Ultor*, an avenger. And *Rivet* ſaith, it was a title the great Monarch took to himſelf, to induce the petty Kings to put themſelves under him. *Iſrael* now, if any ſtrait come, away to King *Jareb*. And you ſhall find, when men have taken the likelieſt way, and have the faireſt hopes, and look for fruit, they are nipped in a night. Creatures, when they are made Idols, are a lye, and are found ſo. God hath told you in *Iſa.* 2. 12, 13, &c. *The day of the Lord of Hoſts ſhall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and they ſhall be brought low. And upon all the Cedars of* Lebanon *that are high and lifted up: and upon all the Oakes of* Baſhan, *&c.* What is the meaning? it is a Proverbial expreſſion whereby the Lord ſets forth, that whatever creature comforts you fly unto, and expect ſupply or help from, the hand of God is upon them: and God would have his people know, that by all ſuch means the wound is made the worſe. They are like a wilde bull in a net, the more he ſtruggles, the more he is intangled; or like the woman that had a bloody iſſue, when ſhe had ſpent all upon Phyſitians, ſhe was never the better. *Ahaz* flyes to the King of *Aſſyria*, but he was ſo far from helping him, that he diſtreſſed him more: and came in upon him as a flood, ſo as he had drowned all the land, *had it not been* Immanuels *land*,

Iſa.

Isa.8.7,8. It is with men in this case, as with those that seek to find out the Elixar or the Philosophers stone, they are raised to great hopes. The spirits grow high, but anon they evaporate and are gone, and then men conclude it is not to be found by Chimestry. So when war is upon a State, men say, we will make peace by the sword; but that will not do: why, then we will do it by confederacy: and if that will not do, yet by a treaty: but God doth usually blast mens expectations in all these.

3. Look to the expressions, that you have in Scripture, of Gods making peace. *I create peace*, Isa. 45. 7. *Creatio est ex nihilo.* Creation is making somewhat out of nothing; so God creates peace, it is called *a speaking of peace.* There be two wayes of working, one by instruments; that is a way of weakness, so we work: the other is by a work in a way of power; so God works. God will shew, there is nothing in your instruments out of which your peace shall be wrought, not power, not policy: but it shall be done only by Gods Word. It is set forth notably in the beginning of this Chapter, they were not only dry bones, but they were scattered: how should they come together? Why, saith God, *Son of man, prophesie upon these bones*: they come together by a word of Prophesie. We read of *the silver cord loosed*, Eccles. 12. 6. by it we understand the sinews of the body, by which the members are tied together; in death these are loosed: so it is in the death of a State, and it is God only can unite these, and when they are brought thus low, he doth it by his Word.

3. He doth it by a creating word.

4. Look to all the peaces in Scripture, that God hath made between people thus divided, and you will find God did never unite them, till they were withered sticks. We read of three great unions in Scripture, one between Gentiles and Gentiles, another between Jews and Jews, and the third between Jew and Gentile, and when God worked either of these, both parties were brought to a low estate.

4. He doth it not till they are dry stricks, as appears in three unions.

First, between Gentiles and Gentiles: the reformed Churches that had departed from *Rome*, and had neither received her mark, nor her Image, yet their condition is set forth by a sea of glass mingled with fire, a great deal of controversie

1. Between Gentiles and Gentiles.

controverſie was between them: ſhall thoſe become one? yes, the reformed Churches are the ten Kingdoms, *Rev.* 17. they have a company of Saints in them that are holy, and choſen, and faithful: and they ſhall all joyn together and hate the whore, and deſtroy her and burn her fleſh with fire. When ſhall that be? what ſhall the condition of theſe people be, at this time? Look into *Rev.* 11. and you ſhall find immediately before, Antichriſt ſhall be deſtroyed, the witneſſes ſhall be ſlain. Who are the witneſſes? thoſe that bear witneſs to the truths of God againſt Antichriſt: it notes the higheſt pitch of ſuffering. And conſider, the interval between the pouring out of the fourth Vial and the fifth, is the time when the witneſſes are ſlain. Now when they are united, their condition juſt before, is under the violenteſt perſecution that ever they felt.

2. Between Jews and Jews.

2. There ſhall be a re-union between Jews and Jews, the ten Tribes and the two. What ſhall be their condition, when they ſhall be united? In *Dan.* 11. 44. you read of *Tidings coming out from the Eaſt and from the North*, it is the gathering of the Jews from all quarters. And what ſhall be the ſtate of this people? if you look into the firſt verſe of the twelfth Chapter: *There ſhall be great trouble ſuch as never was ſince they were a Nation.* They ſhall be under ſuch affliction, as they never ſaw before.

3. Between Jew and Gentile.

3. There ſhall be an union between Jew and Gentile. *There ſhall be one fold under one Shepherd.* What ſhall be their condition before this union? you may give a great gueſs by the conſideration of the ſixth Vial, *Rev.* 16. 10. *The great river* Euphrates *is dryed up.* It is meant of the great power of the Turke, and the *Kings of the Eaſt* are this Jewiſh Nation, the drying up of the river *Euphrates* is to make way for them. Whither muſt they go? againſt Antichriſt ſay ſome: but moſt ſay, to make way for the Eaſtern Chriſtians to joyn with the Weſtern. You ſee, through what hardſhip God doth accompliſh union for his people: they are firſt brought very low. Will you ſee the reaſons of it?

Reaſ. 1. Becauſe God herein will be acknowledged.

The firſt is, (that which we ſhould have ſpoken to more largely in the former doctrine) becauſe God in theſe great works

works will be only acknowledged, therefore they must be brought to such a condition, as all probability and possibility shall be laid aside. To make peace and war, hath been observed to be an act of Royal Soveraignty, and alwayes accompanies Supremacy. The Lord sounds the alarm to war. *When I have bent* Judah *for me, and filled the bow with* Ephraim: *and raised up thy sons O* Zion, *against thy sons O* Greece, *and made thee as the sword of a mighty man,* Zach. 9. 13. and he alone sounds the retreat. *The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the Nations,* Isa. 52. 10. When Gods power is seen, when his arm is not wrapped up in humane instruments and assistances, then God is said to make bare his arm. *Nazianzen* sets forth under a similitude, the condition of a people much like us. They are, saith he, like people at sea, a present storm ariseth, and is ready to swallow them up: and yet in this storm, every man is striving with his brother, and no man takes care of the common safety: and from this double tempest, there must needs follow shipwrack. Who now can save, but he whom winds and storms obey? when there is a tempest without and a tempest within, he only is able to put the ship into a safe harbour, and he doth it then, that he only may be acknowledged.

Again, till a people be thus brought low, and past hope, they are never fitted for the mercy: and mercies to an unprepared people, are never mercies indeed. We read of a peace, that destroyed the land, *Dan.* 8. 25. and such a peace all must expect that are not prepared for peace. The Lord tells his people, *when they say,* Ashur *shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, nor say to the works of our hands, ye are our Gods, for in thee the fatherless find mercy,* then saith God, *I wil heal your backslidings, and love you freely; for mine anger is turned away,* Hos. 14. 3, 4. When a people say, they are fatherless, and they look for no more help from the mountains and from the hills, then they are fitted for peace: otherwise peace will be to them, but as cordials to a foul stomack that increase the peccant humor. Now a people are brought low, when they have no strength. *We have no*

Reas. 2. Till then a people are not fit for mercy.

ſtrength, no might againſt this great company that cometh againſt us, ſaith Jehoſaphat, 2 *Chron.* 20. 12. When they have no wiſdom, *we know not*, ſaith he, *what to do.* When they have no friends, no allyes, no hope, that is the qualification God requires. *Thou didſt not ſay, there is no hope.* Till then a people are never prepared for mercy. If people had once left off their reſting on humane helps, they might expect, God would come in to their help.

Reaſ. 3. Till then the cauſe of the difference will continue.

Thirdly, unleſs a people be brought off from all hopes in humane helps and ſuccours, the cauſe that made the war at firſt will continue: and ſo there can be no peace expected. God will not give peace to gratifie the luſts of men on either ſide. There be theſe cauſes of the preſent war.

Cauſes of the warr.

1. Pride and affection of power.

1. An inward pride and ſecret affectation of eminency and power. What made the *Perſian* Monarch to deſire to be worſhipped as God, but an exaltation of ſelf upon creatures ſtrength? She ſaith, *I ſhall be a Lady forever,* Iſa. 47. 7. How doth God confute this? See in the ſecond of *Zephaniah.* ver. 11. *The Lord will be terrible unto them: for he will famiſh all the gods of the earth, and men ſhall worſhip him. Alexander* was convinced of this: when he came to dye, he tells his flatterers, *I muſt now dye like a man, that you have vainly honoured as a god.*

2. Wilfulneſs.

2. There is a great wilfulneſs in men: *voluntas tua infernus tuus,* ſaith *Bernard.* It is a mans will, that will be his hell after this life: and this wilfulneſs is the great plague of a Nation: but how is this cured? *David* tells you, how it was cured in him, *Pſalm* 131. that God had exerciſed him and brought him low: ſo as *his heart was quieted, as a child weaned from the Mother: yea his ſoul was as a weaned child.*

3. Unteachableneſs.

3. There is an unteachableneſs, and uncounſellableneſs in men. Now when God brings men low, they are become more docible, *when* Iſrael *are outcaſts gathered together by the Lord, then he ſendeth forth his word and melteth them,* Pſalm 147. 18.

4. A ſpirit of revenge.

4. There is a ſpirit of revenge and bloodthirſtineſs: bloodthirſtineſs and blood-guiltineſs go together: *quod facere non poſſumus imbecilles, hoc cupimus irati,* was *Salvians* obſervation.

vation. The Lord muſt cauſe the envy of *Ephraim* to depart, *Iſa.* 11. 13. And then they which before were to one another as Wolves, and Leopards, and Lions, ſhall become ſo tractable, ſo counſellable, that a little child ſhall lead them: and till you be brought thus low, the cauſes of the war will continue, and ſo you can expect no peace.

Hence then learn how far, according to the preſent temper of this State, you are from peace. It may be ſadly ſaid of us: *The way of peace we know not*; Notwithſtanding all the Trials God hath exerciſed us with. You cannot ſay, that either party are in their own thoughts dry ſticks, though brought low. Look but on the preſent Pride and Luxury that abounds every where, as if we had retained nothing of our former peace, but the ſins of it. *Uſe.* Shews how far we are from peace.

Conſider what a ſtrange judgement is upon us in reſpect of our ſecurity and inſenſibleneſs. *Gray hairs are here and there upon us, and we know it not: the overflowing ſcourge is gone forth*, and yet every man promiſeth himſelf ſafety and freedom: not only they that are up, in preſent enjoyments; but they that are down, in future expectations.

Conſider mens rage and violence one againſt another: it is an effect of the fourth Vial. Men hate deliverance and the means of obtaining it, they had rather enjoy bondage under the notion of liberty, then for fear of the notion of bondage be ſet free.

See the condition of the common enemy, they have power and they have policie. All manner of deviliſh practices on the one hand; and all helliſh and damnable opinions and doctrines on the other hand. If this be the condition, and men come together to pray for peace, no wonder if they go away condemned by their own prayers. If God do not uſe to reſtore his people, till he have brought them ſo low as you have heard, then ſurely the way of peace we have not yet known. Is that to know the way of peace, for the people of God to joyn with the enemies of God? His enemies ſurely will not be your

friends, unleſs you have the power and wiſdom of God, *to make the wrath of men to turn to his praiſe, and the remainder of their rage to reſtrain.* If *Judah* joyn with *Aſſur* to ſerve his own ends, he ſhall, whether he will or no, ſerve the turn of *Aſſur* againſt the Church of God. But how ſhall we know, when a people are qualified for peace? what will the temper be of ſuch a people? would you know that? take theſe rules.

When a people are qualified for peace.

1. They ſilently ſubmit to the hand of God.

A people brought low and fitted for peace, are brought into a ſilent ſubmiſſion to the hand of God, their complainings will be at an end. They ſay as the Church doth, *Lam.* 3. 39. *Wherefore doth the living man complain, or murmur? a man for the puniſhment of his ſin.* And confeſs with them in *Ezra.* 9. 13. *Our God hath puniſhed us, leſs then our iniquities deſerve.*

2. They are ready to forgive each other.

When a people are in a fit temper for peace and to be reconciled, there will be a readineſs of heart to forgive one another. When this people were to be made one, the Lord ſaith, *In thoſe dayes and in that time, the children of* Iſrael *ſhall come, they and the children of* Judah *together, going and weeping, they ſhall go and ſeek the Lord their God: they ſhall ask the way to* Sion *with their faces thitherward*, Jer. 50. 4, 5. Thoſe who come to bewail their own evils, will not bitterly charge their brethrens evils.

3. They reject all vain confidences.

When you are qualified for peace, there will be a willing caſting away of all hope in your own power. You muſt ſay, *Aſſur* ſhall not ſave us. And alſo a caſting away of all dependance on your own righteouſneſs. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, I do not this for your ſakes, O houſe of* Iſrael, *but for mine holy Names ſake*, Ezek. 36. 22. and in the thirty firſt verſe, *Not for your ſakes do I do this, ſaith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be ye aſhamed and confounded for your own wayes, O houſe of* Iſrael. God expects you ſhould know it, that he doth it not for your righteouſneſs, but for his own Names ſake. You may have too high and overweaning thoughts and opinions of the goodneſs of your own cauſe, and the holineſs of your own

own party, but God will have you to know that it is not for your ſakes, and you muſt be brought to acknowledge it too.

When men are fitly qualified for reconciliation, then they are brought to mourn after the Lord, more then after any thing elſe. *Seneca* ſaith of a good King, he can threaten his Subjects with no greater puniſhment, then that he will leave them. You ſee the glory of the Lord departing. God hath brought you into ſtraits; he ſeemeth to delight over you to do you evil, as before he did to do you good. Do you mourn after the Lord? 4. They mourn after the Lord.

When a people are qualified for mercy, they are willing to hear what is the will of God: ready to learn from any hand, to be guided by a little child, though they have been of the fierceſt ſpirits, yet now a child ſhall lead them, *Iſa.* 11. 6. willing to be brought under the yoke of grace, to take up reformation upon any tearms. When *Luther* began to preach the Goſpel, and the light of it began to dawn, ſo as the groſs wickedneſs of *Rome* appeared, the Pope calls together diverſe Cardinals and others, and tells them, ſomething muſt be done for reformation: but the Archbiſhop of *Capua* withſtood it, *ne jactent Lutherani*, &c. leſt, ſaith he, the Lutherans ſhould brag that they have forced us to it. God will have reformation in this Kingdom, though it hath been withſtood: reformation in your wayes, and in your worſhip. Why doth God ſhake Kingdoms? is it not to remove the things that are made? *Heb.* 12. 25. there be many things made, many inventions of men in the worſhip of God. God will have them reformed. If you be not reformed now, God will have another ſhake for you. Theſe are the qualifications of a people, that are fitted for peace: and that ſhall be found amongſt them, for whom God will make peace in mercy. And when God hath brought you to this, know, he hath not a purpoſe to deſtroy you and this Nation. You are one of thoſe ten Kingdoms, that muſt hate the whore and burn her fleſh with fire. And in the midſt of all your ſtraits, 5. They are willing to hear what is the will of God.

whereof ſome are yet to come: let it be ſaid of you, as it is of *Joſeph*, Gen. 49. 23, 24. *The Archers ſorely grieved him and ſhot at him and hated him: but his bow abode in ſtrength:* his bow was a bow of ſteel, it notes *invictum animi robur*, his invincible courage, the conſtancy of his faith: *The arms of his hand were made ſtrong by the hands of the mighty God of* Jacob. If you find ſuch a temper of ſpirit wrought in you, let your bow abide in ſtrength, bear up your hearts and ſpirits with the great things that God hath promiſed; The two ſticks ſhall be made one, they ſhall be one in his hand.

FINIS.